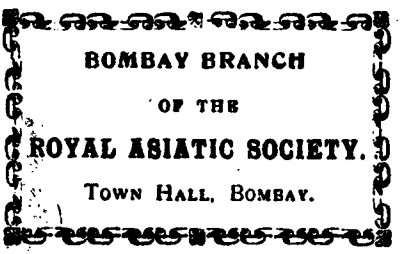
00097949



Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016

POSTHUMOUS PAPERS.

THE

POSTHUMOUS PAPERS,

FACETIOUS AND FANCIFUL,

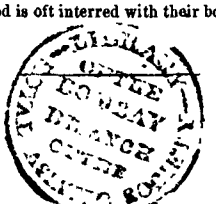
OF

A PERSON LATELY ABOUT TOWN.

97949
a

"The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones."

SHAKSPEARE.



NN h16

LONDON:

WILLIAM SAMS,

ROYAL LIBRARY, ST. JAMES'S STREET.

MDCCCXXVIII.

1828

God
828
Pos / Pos
97949

LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES,
Stamford Street.

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

Two or three days before the Author of the following Papers forsook this 'breathing world,' I made a morning call at his lodgings. He was alone, in grey dressing-gown and easy slippers, expatiating upon an egg and butter. He was glad to see me; and we chatted, pleasantly enough, upon how poor one friend was getting, how rich another—upon the last novel and the new play, till conversation, that small change for the gold of thought, being counted down, I rose to depart, lest the pleasant impressions I had received should be effaced. "Stay," he said, "a moment." Here he assumed an important look uncommon to his features, and rising as readily as he could, (for my friend was fat,) he produced from his bureau a bundle of papers, carefully tied up, and with two or three preliminary hems, resumed his seat. "You smoke, I believe?" he enquired. "Occasionally," I replied. "And you

have doubtless, among your acquaintance, some young ladies who curl their hair o' nights?" "To the best of my knowledge, I have."—"These papers," he said, looking infinitely serious, and fumbling them about as Falstaff dabbled with the flowers ere he died,—"these papers—trifles as they are—were once the solace of many melancholy hours, in adverse days now gone and past, when I was, as a young gentleman should be, somewhat sentimental; walked much alone in the Temple gardens; admired the moon, but knew not what to say to her; wore a pale cheek, and a dejected look, instead of this sanguine face, of health's own purple hue; and cultivated the line of grace, in lieu of this circle of obesity—this rotundo of flesh!" As he wound up this period of his reminiscences, he surveyed himself with a humourous eye downwards, and smoothed the lower half of his waistcoat with complacent hands.

He resumed:—"I am now an altered man—the same Work, but with corrections and considerable additions. Twenty years added to eighteen have taught me to live *in* the world, not *out* of it; to laugh *with* the world, not *at* it. To have learnt this is to have acquired something. Yes, if I sigh now, it is from shortness of

breath; if moisture trickles from my eyes, it is at the humour of the day. I have ceased to be ambitious of that bubble, 'a name.' The race for reputation has too many competitors:—it is too much like a run of five hundred out of a hard shower: if you get first under a portal, all who follow heartily hate you for your superior activity; and if you are among those that lag, you despise yourself. Not to be a competitor is to be more remarkable."

Here he paused, to recover breath; and then continued:—"Yes—I have done with fame, and such unstable pursuits. There is but one worthy ambition," turning his eyes to an antique bust of Socrates, standing on a bracket in a recess, "namely, to live wisely and virtuously: all the rest is but 'vanity and vexation of spirit.'"—I had never till then heard my friend deliver himself so didactically. "Life is not long at the longest," he continued: "I grow lusty—my foot is heavy, and my breathing stertorous. I have passed the half-way inn on the road of life, and am descending that hill, at whose base runs that 'bourne from whence no traveller returns.' A man in such circumstances need not have the lightest folly of his youth on his back, to accelerate his descent.

"But to the immediate purpose. These Manuscripts, which were, as I have already confessed, a solace, are now a disappointment. I have not Roman fortitude enough myself to destroy them: you are, I think, my friend—my Strato:—take them, and let me see them no more. A leaf of mine will screw up a curl, or light a cigar as well as one of a better author's: the papers may be indifferent, but the foolscap is good." Saying this, he placed them in my hands:—I accepted the deposit, in accordance with the spirit of his wishes, and not the letter; and left him 'as well as could be expected.' It was the last time I saw my poor friend alive.

He had been a discontented, morbid man; but was fast arriving at the sum and substance of life,—health, and ease of mind. In the course of the evening he had been chirping out these favourite lines from his admired Cowley—

> "Ah yet, ere I descend to th' grave,
> May I a small house and large garden have;
> And a few friends, and many books—both true,
> Both wise, and both delightful too"—

when he was called away, his reckoning 'half made up.'——The manner of his death need not be con-

cealed:—he broke his neck in attempting to look at his knee-buckle!——Peace to his departed spirit!—I could have better spared a thinner friend.

On looking over the papers intrusted to me, these, among others, were found pricked down for publication; and I believe that I have fulfilled his real wishes (his modesty notwithstanding) in placing them before the arbiters of life or death to authors. He had not, however, with his usual negligence bestowed one mark of that prudent supervision which a literary father, careful of his reputation, should have bestowed on the bantlings of his brain; but, like the parents of certain other anonymous productions, left them as bare as they were born. As his executor, I have endeavoured to bring out these orphans in as decent a condition as possible; and if they are received with only half the kindness which he extended to the *apocrypha* of his contemporaries, I shall not fear the result.

CONTENTS.

	Page
HAROUN SCHEMZEDDIN, THE LONELY MAN OF SHIRAZ —(*Reprinted from the Monthly Magazine*) . . .	1
THE HUMOUROUS MAN—(*Baldwin's London Magazine*)	36
RETRIBUTION, THE DREAM OF A DERVISH—(*Album*) .	44
THE AWKWARD MAN	58
TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES. A Winter-day . . .	80
A STORY OF THE OLD TIME IN ITALY—(*Album*) . . .	89
ON WHAT THE LADIES CALL 'NICE MEN'—(*New Monthly Magazine*)	108
TWO EYES BETWEEN TWO, A TALE OF BAGDAD . . .	119
TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES. The Pleasures of Winter	140
STORY OF THE POOR MAN OF GENIUS	157
TURNSTILE HALL, A SKETCH	185
TALKERS—(*New Monthly Magazine*)	202
ITALIAN BROTHERS, A TALE	212
THE OTHER FIG, AN APOLOGUE—(*Literary Gazette*) .	243
THE TRUE USE OF RICHES	249
TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES. A Rainy-day . . .	258
THE ECCENTRIC POET	266
TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES. A Dog-day—(*Monthly Magazine*)	274
A CHAPTER ON PIGS	281
GOOD IN THINGS EVIL	288
THE MAD MAID'S DEATH	302

HAROUN SCHEMZEDDIN.

POSTHUMOUS PAPERS.

HAROUN SCHEMZEDDIN,

THE LONELY MAN OF SHIRAZ.

HAROUN SCHEMZEDDIN was an honest, hard-working basket-maker of Shiraz, one of the most famous cities of Persia; but though early as the bee, and industrious as the ant, honest Haroun was as poor as a pilgrim, and not half so patient. Wandering in one of his daily fits of discontent by a pleasant stream which winds about that city, he fell into the usual strain of rumination on the poverty of his estate.

"Why," exclaimed he, "should I toil for ever, day and night, night and day, and yet want food and comfort, while there are those idle ones in Shiraz, who think it too laborious to pour out a precious liquor into a golden cup for themselves, and who, having all that they want, enjoy nothing that they have? The lazy lord of yonder stately palace of a hundred towers, glutted with the gifts of fortune, and crammed with the daintiest good things of this life, lolls from morn till night on carpets, the richest weavings of the

Persian loom, and is fattened with flattery and the finest fowls, and surrounded by a hundred women, the fairest of Circassia, whom he neither loves nor delights, but whose business it is to strive to delight him, though they cannot love him. Yes—he is fat with the choicest foods, and so pursy, that he cannot rise from his cross-legged squat without the help of two of his stoutest eunuchs, nor sit down again with less help; whilst I am so thin, that two men might hardly hold me down to earth during the sirocco. A hundred slaves, more pliant to his purposes than the lithest willows which I twist into baskets, are ever on the watch to prevent a single want, whilst I have a thousand wants which no one will even notice, much more prevent. They pour on his beard the fragrant oils of Ataghan, whilst mine is only moistened with melancholy tears. They waft cool perfumes around his chambers, as if the wholesome air of heaven was not sweet enough for his most delicate nostrils. They steep him in baths whose waters are made voluptuous with essences distilled from the roses of Cashmere, and the lilies of Teflis, and as he reclines in the bath the voices of singers please his ear with the soft songs of Mirza; whilst I am compelled to perform my sacred ablutions in the common river, with no other singing than the nightingale's, and no richer perfume than that which the roses on either bank fling liberally to the open air: these are sweet enough, truly; but though they are of the world I have not the world to thank for them. These several things, however, serve to prove what I have long suspected,"

concluded the discontented Haroun, "and what indeed our greatest philosopher, the divine Sâdee, the light of the world, hinted to his disciples, *that though whatever is was to be, yet nothing is as it should be.*"

It was the hour of sunrise, and the once-worshipped god of the Persians was then lifting his glorious forehead over the heights of the city; and from every minaret the voice of the Muezzin called on all true believers to rise to their orisons. Haroun heard not the summons, but he knew the hour, and quieting the murmurs of his mind for a moment, he turned eastward, and prostrating himself on his face, worshipped in silence and seriousness the new God—the one God—of whom Mahomet was the prophet. His prayers performed, he arose from the green earth, and forgot in devouter thoughts the discontented axiom of Sâdee the philosopher.

Next to his devotions, it is the duty of a believing Persian, morning and evening, to ablute himself. Haroun, who was either too much a lover of loneliness, or too sullen to visit the public baths, contented himself with the more wholesome waters of the river; and stripping off his scanty and tattered vestments, he plunged into the stream with so hearty a good-will, that one might have supposed he never meant to come up again with a living face to the light. He rose again, however, after some moments; and it was easy to perceive, by the length of time he had passed under the water, that something extraordinary had kept him down longer than was usual, for he came to the surface gasping for breath, and shouting out vehe-

ciently, when he could breathe, "O great and good Alla! what hast thou sent me here?" After much struggling, and diving again and again, he appeared to be moving some heavy body from the deep water to the shoals of the river side, a labour which he very ingeniously performed by striking out backwards with his feet below the wave, his head being still above it. After a few moments' rest, he rolled on to the shore a huge earthern jar, such as is used by the merchants of the East to transport their oils from trading-mart to trading-mart. Without waiting to dress himself further than to slip into his loose trowsers and poor pelisse, he began, with many sinewy efforts, to rear the ponderous jar, heavier than its size might seem to warrant, with the weight of its contents. Having placed it on end, he perceived that its mouth was hermetically sealed: he looked about, therefore, for some instrument to break it, and finding nothing so capable as a huge stone which had been flung up by the tide, he seized it, and lifting it high over head with both hands, dropped it, like the hammer of a smith on his anvil, upon the mouth of the jar, which broke in with the blow, and displayed to his staring eyes contents more precious than the oil of Tarshish—gold and diamonds. Poor Haroun almost shrieked with surprise and with the agitation which this sudden gift of fortune struck through all his senses.

After some delirious moments spent in shouts of joy, in clapping his hands, and dancing extravagantly about this precious jar, he threw himself, in his deli-

him, on the ground, and gave praise to Mahomet, who was then the best of prophets, for Harbam then was the best of believers. Then leaping lightly on his feet, he began to consider how he might conceal and convey away with secresy his new-found treasures, which would else be no sooner found than lost; but the extravagance of his mind would allow him no cool moment for thought, and all he could do was to dabble with his hands among his gold and jewels; and now put on the seal, and now snatch it off, to gaze with a miser's fondness on his glistening darlings. Then he shut them down again, and penitently cried out, "O, Alla! what a murmuring wretch was I, to agree with the blasphemous Sâdee, that though whatever is was to be, yet nothing is as it should be!" And then he fell to dancing again, and hugging the jar with embracing arms, as fond as it had been a dark-eyed girl of the valleys of Circassia. At length, his delirium being spent, and his joy, from its intensity, turning to tears, he sat himself down by the jar, still clasping it with his arms, and then fell into this fantastic rumination. "Surely I am son to Fortune, and never knew Penury but by her hated name, or, if I did, never shall be more acquainted with her; for I am now richer than Ophir for gold, and brighter than Golconda for diamonds! Yes—in riches, I am the companion of kings; for greatness ever follows fortune: wisdom, of course, follows greatness—I am great, and I shall be wise in due season—I can wait till I am served. But Greatness cannot lie, or sit, or even put his head into low hovels

without injury to his greatness; it is therefore highly necessary that I should directly quit my wooden hut on the osier isle, and seek for a palace ready erected to deposit my greatness in, or else to command that one be erected, fit and proper for my reception. In the mean time I shall be requested, as a particular favour, to take up my abode in the palace of the King; and as I purpose not to be proud and forgetful of my former poverty, I may, after some hesitation, consent, and shall merely require of him to retire to his hunting-court in the plains till I have done with it. He will, of course, comply with this moderate proof of the confidence he may safely entertain of my high regard for him, and I shall live splendidly and feed sumptuously at my leisure. My bread will be served to me on platters of silver, my meats in dishes of gold, and my sherbet in vases and cups carved out of the onyx, the jasper, and the chrysolite; and a thousand precious stones will enrich the brims. My slaves will fear my frown: I shall show no feeling for them, for he who feels for a slave is himself a slave at heart. My women, of course, will all love me; they must be handsome, for I have every reason to think that I am handsome. I will not indulge incontinent appetites—no—a hundred of the fairest of the fair of Georgia and Circassia shall content me; and, with the blessing of Alla, these will produce to my bed—say, two hundred sons and daughters—ay, two hundred sons and daughters—as the olive branches of my domestic happiness. The boys will become princes, from their extraordinary deserts,

as generals, conquerors, and legislators; and the European world (which is but a small part of the world, after all) will tremble at the name of any one of the race of Schemzeddin: the girls will become empresses, queens, and princesses, through the beauty which they will inherit from their father and mothers: more monarchs, and those the mightiest of the mighty, will sigh for them than can possibly win them, for only the most imperial of emperors and most kingly of kings will, of course, be successful in their ambitious pretensions to degrade the daughters of Schemzeddin to condescend to sit upon their thrones. The rest must wait —yes, must wait, with becoming resignation, till I have begotten a hundred other daughters, when haply they may, but it is just as it shall happen, be honoured in their turn, upon their betraying a proper sense of the high honour reserved for them. As for the rejected, they may either hang, drown, stab, or poison themselves, whichever is most convenient and agreeable to them; or, should they decline either of those deaths, and still desire to live under the disgrace of my refusal, they have but to resign their several thrones, and the father of emperors, the begetter of kings, and the filler of thrones, will, in the munificence of his generosity, take care that their subjects shall not want sovereigns while there is one of the sons of Haroun Schemzeddin the Sublime unprovided for. I shall live to witness all these exceedingly possible circumstances come to pass, and shall be the wonder, envy, and admiration of the world. My baskets—(were they baskets

which I amused my idle hours in making? (Yes, I think I recollect, they were baskets!)—my baskets, I say, will be sought after by the curious of all parts of the globe, who will prize them (no higher than they deserve to be estimated) as the rarest and most curious of curiosities; nation will war with nation for the possession of one of them, and thousands, nay millions, of common lives will be considered a cheap sacrifice, a too moderate price for the purchase. Every kingdom in the world will send ambassadors to pay me homage; and the princes and nobles who come in their trains, will consider themselves exceedingly honoured if I condescend to kick my slippers in disdain among them. After a hundred years of enjoyment of these poor honours, so unworthy of me, and which, indeed, will fall infinitely short of my great deserts, tired of the feeble endeavours of the world to render me sufficient homage, I shall die—(must I die? Is there any absolute necessity that I should? Yes, I suppose I must, out of respect to so absurd a custom—an act of conformity which the little minds of the vulgar world are wont to insist upon from the great ones)—I shall die; and the remaining world will weep my death, and the thousand cities which compose it contend for the honour of my birth. But there I shall disappoint the avaricious of so high an honour; for I shall leave it as a strict injunction to the princes my sons, who will at their deaths impose it on the kings their sons, who, when they die, will enjoin the emperors their sons, who, resigning the insignificant crowns of this world to reign

in Paradise, will command the empresses, their wives, to impress upon the minds of the young emperors, their sons, the heavy responsibility of the duty which will devolve upon them, in confiding to the princes, their sons, the great secret which their sons' grandsons are not unguardedly to reveal to their sons, lest their sons' sons should too precipitately disclose the sublime, the important fact, which only their last son's son should publicly declare (the two thousand years of this mighty mystery being expired), that I was certainly born in the ever-renowned and then more-than-ever-to-be renowned city of Shiraz; when all the other famous cities of the earth will console themselves in their disappointment, as well as they can, with the murmuring maxim of Sâdee the philosopher, 'that whatever is was to be, though nothing is as it should be.'"

Here his delirious dream of greatness was interrupted; for at that moment he thought he heard (as he still lay on the ground encircling with both arms the waist of the jar) the seal lifted gently off by a hand which was not his, and looking up, he saw, to his consternation, a sturdy ruffian, whom he recognized as a well-known river-robber, standing over him with a dagger in one hand, whilst the other was thrust wrist-high among his gold and jewels. Haroun started, and for a moment looked fear-struck; but recovering his courage, he roared out, "What dost thou here, villain?"

"What callest thou me villain?" retorted the robber sternly; "art not thou a greater villain, that hast more gold than thou canst carry, whilst I have not a

beggarly dirhem to bestow on a faquir for his blessing, were I to ask it? But nothing is as it should be: one man has every thing, and another nothing. I shall, however, strive to make a more equal partition of the good things of the world, and shall lighten thee of a part of thy share of too much."

And so saying, he began snatching up the diamonds and gold, and thrusting them by handfuls into his pockets.

Haroun, seeing this, leaped on his feet in disregard of his dagger, and dealing him a right-handed blow under the ear, being by nature strong, and by this outrage made stronger, he sent the grasping robber stunned and headlong into the river, where he sunk like a plummet to the bottom. Haroun looked on at his struggles, and made no effort to save him, though, being an expert swimmer and diver, he might, if he had felt so inclined: but the maxim of Sâdee —"whatever is was to be"—deterred him; and he let the shrieking and struggling wretch drown under his very nose, and like a good Mussulman gave Mahomet praise, that so much of his wealth had escaped the robber's hand.

Now it happened, unluckily for the lucky Haroun, that the whole of this encounter with the robber had been observed, from the opposite shore, by some of the myrmidons of the law, who, having crossed the river by the first bridge, had come round to the spot where Haroun was still employed, partly in thanksgivings to Mahomet for his marvellous escape, and

partly in contrivances how he might best convey away his treasures. He had just resolved to carry off as much as he could safely secrete about him, and then, after sealing up the jar, to roll it back into the river, and daily to visit it till he had emptied it—he had filled his pockets, and was about to seal up the jar, when he was seized on the sudden by two of the hardest hands he had ever felt, and looking round, he saw that he was in the iron gripe of the law!—His heart sank within him, and his knees rattled together like dry bones.

"Come, come, my honest friend," said an officer, "as you have just murdered a man, and cannot spend these riches between this hour and that when the bow-string will be your necklace, we will, in the King's name, carry you and your treasure to the palace of the Cadi, where you will find justice, and an executioner of excellent skill in his art, and be thoroughly convinced that every thing is as it should be."

There were six of these officers—it was in vain, therefore, for Haroun to think of remonstrating with them as he had done with the robber, so he patiently submitted himself without a blow. Having bound his hands behind him, they ordered him to march on before them, which he complied with, casting, however, many a wishful look at the jar, as two or three of the stoutest of his guard haled it along. Poor Haroun's present situation contrasted so miserably with the extravagant expectations of his late reverie, that he could not help exclaiming, in that tone of melancholy

humour, which was characteristic of him. "Where are the kings my sons, that they suffer Haroun Schemzeddin the Sublime to receive these insults?" The officers hearing this, thought him mad with extreme love of wealth; then they looked at him, and considered him, too young for a miser; however, they respected his jar and its contents very honestly, although Haroun, as he kept continually turning round to the three lusty fellows who bore it slowly along, seemed to hint at a silent suspicion which he entertained that they had itching palms.

At length they reached the palace of the Cadi, and there the medley mob of citizens, who had followed at the heels of the unfortunate Haroun, became numerous and more numerous. He was proverbial among them for a discontented disposition, and for a sullen scorn of his poor estate, and the poor companions with whom poverty makes a man intimate, as if to reconcile him to his own lot, by showing him the lot of others as much neglected by fortune as himself; and now learning that he was seized as a murderer, and that great treasures had been found in his keeping, they took care to testify how well they remembered his few faults. Some spat at him, and some threw dirt in his face, and others dirtier execrations, till he had reached the very threshold of the palace; but honest Haroun heeded not their scoffs, nor did he care much for their spittle; he contented himself with recommending to them that they had much better preserve their moisture to wet their fingers withal in case they should happen

to burn them as he had burnt his; and then discontentedly consoled himself, that nothing was as it should be.

It was in that day the law of Shiraz, that where one man had killed another, he should make all the reparation in his power to the surviving widows and children, if there were any, and it was agreeable to both parties, by husbanding the one and fathering the other, so that the culprit was condemned to life rather than to death: he had, however, the option, whether he preferred the noose of matrimony to the bowstring of justice. But if there were neither wives nor children, he was strangled forthwith, unless he could produce golden objections to this summary proceeding; and these met with the entire approbation of the Cadi, who had, in these cases, a particular leaning to the side of mercy, and loved very much to see the two scales of justice, one kicking the beam with a bowstring rolled up in it, and the other kissing the ground with a satisfying consideration of pieces of gold flung promiscuously in by no miserly hand. Indeed the Cadi's love of mercy was well-known, and a handsome bribe handsomely (that is, covertly) conveyed, was never known to fail in loosening the tightest bowstring at the latest moment in which a reprieve could be of service. It was but the day previous that he exhibited this tender weakness, in the case of a young gentleman of good family, who had unfortunately happened to strangle his grandfather merely to obtain his handsome grandmother, who happened, in this instance, to be a year

or two younger than the young gentleman himself, instead of being, as is too often the case, half a century older: he was, however, condemned to the bowstring, at the particular intercession of several really venerable grandmothers, who thought, very wisely, that an example was necessary in this instance, since there was no knowing to what such a crime might lead if not timely checked; there were, alas! to the shame of the charity of the citizens of Shiraz, some who thought that the old ladies were sinister in this recommendation, and that their anxiety for justice arose from another feeling—their despair that any young and handsome grandson of theirs would ever run the same risk for the same end.

It was customary to tighten the bowstring about the necks of the condemned, whether they were to be strangled or spared, to keep up the appearance of justice, lest the poor rascals of which mobs are composed should cry out, that the bowstring of the law was not made to fit the necks of rich rascals—which had been a calumny that might have made Justice herself pull the bandage she wears over her eyes down over her entire face, to conceal her shame. The fatal string was, therefore, duly entwined round the neck of the young gentleman, and the word to "pull" was given; but just as he began to chuckle in the throat, to look sanguine in complexion, and to stare blind Justice rather rudely in the face, the merciful Cadi relented, and cried out, "Pray don't hurt the young gentleman!"—the two ends of the bowstring of Justice dropt

harmlessly over his shoulders like a tasselled ornament; and the condemned grandson rose on his feet, and, like a polite young gentleman as he was, made the grand salām of compliment to the Cadi; who likewise rose, like a well-bred and urbane judge as he also was, and returned his salutation. Unfortunately, however, for the credit of clemency, he dropt at the same moment, from beneath the ample folds of his robes, a heavy purse of gold which he had just received from the young grandmother's hand, as she stood behind the judgment-seat, who, poor young gentlewoman, doubtless thought it extremely hard that, in one brief day, she should lose a husband who was so venerably old, and a lover who was so handsomely young. The rascal mob murmured at this delicate distinction of the Cadi, who indignantly ordered the court to be cleared, after a dozen of the more obstreperous had had their soles well bastinadoed and their beards well plucked for their impertinence in interrupting the due course of justice. However, he repaired this seeming dereliction in the same day; for a ragged, rascally, poor villain was brought before him, charged with stealing, from an incontrollable hunger which the vagabond indulged in, part of a cold kid that had been left in the Cadi's larder; and having neither gold, nor friend who had, and was willing to come down with it, he was strangled with the utmost punctuality, and the Cadi ate what he had left of the kid with the greater relish, that any one should have admired it so much

as to run his neck into the bowstring for dining off it unbidden.

It was before this lover of justice and mercy, that the trembling and chap-fallen Haroun was dragged by the many-armed law. "We have brought into the presence of the mirror of magistracy, the medium of mercy, the mouth of wisdom, the tongue of truth, the sword of severity, and the tight string of terror, a singular sort of knave, who has robbed even a robber," said the officers to the Cadi. "Of what?" demanded the Cadi. "Of life," answered the myrmidons of the law. "Bring in the bowstring, and order up the coffee," commanded the magistrate.

"But," urged Haroun, with a whining voice, "this robber, whom I have *only* drowned, my lord the Cadi, would have robbed my lord the King!"—"Of what, slave?" roared the Cadi. "Of this jar of jewels and gold, which I had commanded him in the King's name to aid and assist me in conveying to the coffers of the mussel of monarchs, the pearl of princes, the diamond of dignity, the miracle of mercy, perfume of the world, light of the sun and moon, goldsmith of the stars, parasol of Persia, lord of the four-and-twenty umbrellas, the first-made of men, and king over Persia, which reigns over the rest of the world," answered the wily Haroun, who knew well enough that the only safe way to play unharmed with power was to smooth down its paws, and forget that it had talons. "Ho! if that is the case, let the coffee take precedence of the bowstring, and

we will in our clemency hear thy tale," countermanded the Cadi. The coffee was brought: "And now, slave, propound the possession of this wealth."

Then Haroun told the story of his finding the treasure, and where; and calculating very shrewdly, that a living basket-maker was better than a dead one, he made it appear how honestly he meant to serve the King in the whole affair, and that his zeal for his rights had been the sole cause of the unfortunate death which he had dealt the robber. "I could have saved him, as I am a good swimmer," urged the wary Haroun; "but would it have become an honest man and a true subject to save a robber of his King?"—"You are an honest fellow and a brave subject, and argue like a wise one, too," said the Cadi, putting off his judicial frown for a judicious smile. "The treasures which you have found are undoubtedly the King's, for they were taken from a river in his kingdom: I claim them therefore in the name of the king my master," continued the Cadi, laying his hand upon the mingled heap of diamonds and gold. As he drew it back again, Haroun thought he observed that to the Cadi's hand, being perhaps rather warm and moist, several of the diamonds had adhered rathert enaciously, especially on the palm and in between the fingers; but it would ill have become him to observe more than this, especially in a minister of justice, whose hands, besides the diamonds, held the two ends of the bowstring of strangulation.

The Cadi, having adjusted his inner robes, which at

that moment, from his fumbling so much among them, seemed to sit uncomfortably upon him, began now to make the usual judicial inquiries. "Had this robber any wives?"—for no man in Persia who has the courage to wive at all, has the prudence to restrict himself to one wife; he must have a plurality of plagues or none. "He had, my lord the Cadi," answered an officer. "How many?"—"Four only," was the reply. "Four only!" exclaimed Haroun, raising his eye-brows; "O Mahomet! that a thief should be indulged with four wives, whilst an honest poor man like myself has not, to this hour, been blessed with one! But this, among other things, induces me to agree with the philosopher Sâdee, that 'nothing is as it ought to be.'"—"What children had he?" further inquired the Cadi. "Forty, my lord," replied the officer. "You must husband the wives, honest Haroun, and father the children," commanded the Cadi, addressing himself to the astounded basket-maker. "What!" he exclaimed, "marry an honest citizen of Shiraz to the four wives of a notorious robber?"—"The better reason," urged the Cadi; "you may thus make honest women of them."—"But the young rogues, his sons—what can I hope for with forty thieves for my sons? I have not forty jars to smother them in," half whimpered he. "Teach them honesty," counselled the Cadi, as he toyed with the diamond heap, and slid his hand under his robe. "O Mahomet, this is too much!" cried Haroun; "bring in the bowstring, and show me the shortest way to Paradise."—"Tush, tush, man," soothed the Cadi; "the

King, in consideration of your loyalty and singular honesty, will, in his liberality, portion you with a hundred pieces, and you will be rich, which few honest men expect to be, if not happy, which no husband with four wives can hope to be."

At this moment the arrangers of the bowstring entered. Haroun eyed them attentively, and sighed out, "Well, lead me to my fate!"—"Which fate?" inquired the officers; "the string or the wives?"—"Is there any difference?" asked Haroun of one of the executioners, who happened to be an old acquaintance: "I ask you as a friend?" continued he, looking in his face with a face most pathetically perplexed. "There is; and be advised by me," said the humane strangler, in a whisper to his ear: "the King, being old, has a marvellous love for gold and diamonds, and will not fail to reward him who adds so largely to his stores as you have done. It is the interest, too, of the Cadi to see that you are not forgotten in this matter, for he will not forget himself. Be advised, then, good Haroun, and live."—"Well, since it must be so, the wives—whatever is, was to be, I suppose," murmured he discontentedly.

He was accordingly led out of the court to the house of the robber, which was hard by, and in a few minutes they had entered the doors. It was a stately and well-furnished mansion, which showed that a thriving thief can afford to live more handsomely than an unthriving honest man. The wives and children were, with all possible tenderness, informed of the melancholy cir-

circumstances of his death: the wives were employed in domestic matters at the time; they did not, however, suspend their business for a moment, but went on with their household work as if nothing had happened to their late lord and master. The children were at their sports when *they* were informed of their father's death; they whooped and gambolled, and continued the race after a blue-winged native of Cashmere just as gaily as before the melancholy tidings were made known to them, and seemed nothing moved, unless their emotion was expressed in their riotous rollings over the grass and over one another. "I have four of the most tender-hearted wives in Shiraz, and forty of the most filial children that ever blessed a man who was not their father! But I suppose whatever is was to be, and though nothing is as it should be, there are many things which might be worse than they are! I must be content, and squeeze as much honey out of my lemon as I can!" sighed the disconsolate Haroun, as he motioned the officers to withdraw: they obeyed, and he was left to his solitary reflections.

"Well," mused he, "with the diamonds I have secreted about me, and the hundred pieces I am promised, the husband of the four wives and the forty children of a robber is at any rate richer than the single basket-maker with no pieces and diamonds. As I am in the pit, I must live in it; so my wives,—do you hear, women?—prepare a bath and a bed for your new lord and master, and I will love you as much as the old one did, to-morrow!—Ah, my lord!" sighed the four wives

with one voice, as if by concert—"My lord!" humphed Haroun, swelling at the title; "come, this is certainly an improvement on the poor knave the basket-maker of yesterday!"—"My lord!" continued the women, "if you love us no more than our late lord, we should be happier to remain disconsolate widows; for he was old." "Well, well," said Haroun, "enough for to-morrow is the evil of to-morrow. There—bid the thirty boys, my sons, to cease shouting, and the ten girls, my daughters, to hold their prattling, that the stranger, their father, may sleep. But well remembered, sweet wives! I am hungry as well as weary—what now, have you for supper, ay? for I will not wink till I am fed." One of the women left the chamber, and in a moment returned with a large silver dish, holding, as its contents, a boiled chicken, lying insled, as it were, in a small ocean of the milk of goats thickened with the whitest of rice. "Beard of my father! that is a dish fit for the cousin of the sun!" exclaimed the delighted Haroun, rubbing his hands with satisfaction, and smacking his lips with expectation. His fingers were in the dish in a moment, and in another the tenderly-boiled fowl was torn limb from limb. "By the mouth of Mahomet," said he, chuckling and choking with hungry haste and enjoyment of his savoury meal, "this is delicious!—and I cannot help thinking how the old rascal, your husband, this morning, hoped to have relished this fine fowl for his supper to-night; and now he is where he cannot eat—and may be eaten, for I'll be sworn on the Koran, that the fishes are already nibbling at his

nose, which was a taking bait for a prince among fishes; it was so rosy and well fed." As he uttered this coarse conceit, he threw himself backward with a fowl-bone in his mouth, half-choking with that and laughter. It was the first time he had laughed for many a moon; and now he stretched his sides till he was glad to hoop them in with his hands, whilst his lungs crowed like a cock. The wives affected to be hurt at his levity, and looked as disconsolate as widows ever appear to be. "And how the old ruffian roared to be saved from drowning!" continued Haroun. "You would have thought he had been the most honest and worthy fellow in Shiraz, instead of the greatest rascal in it—except the Cadi. Now had I been in his place in the river, and he in mine out of it, I would not have bawled for life with half the lungs he used—no, not for a hundred purses added to the hundred he hoped this morning to have lived long enough to have forced from their lawful owners. But thus it is; your rich rogue loves to live, whilst your poor honesty wishes only to die! However, to pay the evil one his tribute-money, I must confess that the old rascal had a princely taste in women; for he has left me four of the handsomest wives that the sun shall see in a day's journey. Come hither, you pretty rogues!" The disconsolate widows smiled, and began to cling about him. Haroun kissed them all with thorough heartiness, and with a fondness quite new to them. This was a pleasant compliment from a good-looking young fellow, and they showed by their attentions to him how sensible

they were of the force of it. "And now, wives, take away the dish, and hand me a kaleoon of the best shiraz, and some sherbet, for I will smoke, drink, and ruminate awhile." These delicacies were brought him ere the words of his wish were cold; and between the sippings of his sherbet and the puffings of his pipe, he indulged his attentive wives with a few interrupted terms of endearment.

After some time thus spent, he dismissed them, with this command: "Wives, leave me, for I feel that I am growing profound." The fact was he was growing fuddled. They obeyed; and knocking out the ashes from the top of the old man's pipe, he finished it with as much satisfaction as if he had begun it. "Well," ruminated he, "Time was not bald in a day, nor the world made of an orange after dinner. I am not so rich as I was in the morning—but I am richer, ay, and happier than I was last night. Give Alla thanks, honest Haroun, for you are in favour with fortune! You have four handsome wives, abundance of fair children which you never had till now the trouble of fathering, a house instead of a hut, a hundred pieces of gold in promise from the Cadi, and a hundred or so of diamonds hidden in your vest, which you may carry into Turkey, under pretence of visiting a rich relation there, safely dispose of them, and come back with camels laden with merchandize to your wives and children, who may yet, under your tuition, seeing as they must the worth and wisdom of their father, become princes and princesses; and you may yet be renowned throughout the world, for con-

verting the sons of a robber into honest men!" With flattering thoughts such as these, together with sherbet and tobacco, he gradually lulled his senses, and after he had stretched himself with a yawn, and a sleepy shudder, he dropt his pipe, which was now out, and then himself, on the carpet, and was asleep. His wives returned, and seeing that he was drowned in deep slumber, they began to examine the superficies of their new lord; and as he was a younger and a handsomer man than their late lord and tyrant, it was agreed by the four voices as one, that the exchange was certainly for the better: so they covered him up carefully and comfortably, and on tiptoe left the chamber.

He had not long been asleep when it might be perceived, by his tossing, and tumbling, and muttering, that he was dreaming. His imagination, excited by the incidents of the day, began to wing to the remotest lands of speculation; and now he was, in his deceitful dream, a merchant rich as the Ind; and now a king beloved of his people and the terror of the rest of the world; and now he was again the poor basket-maker, eating of scanty bread; and now still lower in the grade of misery—a beggar, spurned from a rich man's door. But at length, from the hurry and contradictions of his dream, his fancy flew with a more regular wing, and he thought he was lying in a beautiful valley, discontentedly pining under the ills of life, and wishing for death, when a beautiful acacia, against which he was leaning, began sensibly to move, although there was not so much wind in the valley as would

have flickered the flame of a little lamp. Turning his eyes round to behold the occasion of this, he saw, and was wonder-struck, the trunk of the tree gradually open, as it had been riven from the head to the root by a slow but sharp lightning; and a beautiful Spirit, whom he instantly knew, from traditional description, to be one of the better genii, stepped forth from its centre, enveloped in a golden-coloured glory, that shot around her a thousand separate beams, which in a few moments paled into a more silvery light, and at the same time mingled its distinct beams, till they melted into a wide and radiant halo—as if the moon had fallen from her height in the heavens, but had not lost any ray of her beauty or glory. There was, too, a delicious noise of music around him, which seemed, to his ear, to arise from the very bosom of the earth, through the lips of the violets and roses which grew about his feet; which, although it was night, as he dreamed, yet opened visibly and gradually to his eye, as if they had mistaken the light that spread among them to be the blaze of the sun; and the waters of the valley, which before ran noisily along, seemed to lose their motion, and stood in silence, or only slightly stirred under the vibrations of the unearthly harmony. Haroun, awed by the presence and the manner of the appearing of so fair a vision, had turned himself from his recumbent posture, and had bent himself on one knee, keeping his face to the earth, which glittered as if sprinkled with diamonds more numerous than the myriad stars of the milky way. And now the good

Spirit addressed him, the unearthly music meanwhile not altogether ceasing, but only subduing itself to a more quiet accompaniment of her voice, as if it were indeed a part of it.

"Arise, Haroun Schemzeddin, from that posture of lowliness, for thy virtues have exalted thee to a place in the favour of the good Genius whom I serve, and I am his messenger to thee, bringing thee a knowledge which shall make thee even richer than thy deserts. Know, then, that thou art the son of Haroun Schemzeddin, the wealthiest diamond-merchant and usurer of the East—he who might have bought the world if it had been to be purchased, so boundless were his riches; but none knew the extent of them save the good Spirits, who watch over all, the good and the bad, the poor and the rich, for he had amassed too much to confess his wealth, and it was not suspected. It was in that war which desolated the beautiful valleys and gorgeous cities of Persia, that thy father, (fearful lest the rapacious enemy, and his scarcely less rapacious countrymen, should seize on his treasures) under the all-concealing cloak of night, sank his gold and diamonds beneath the waters of the stream which refreshes the thirsty of Shiraz, intending, when the dove of peace had returned to Persian bowers, to bring them as covertly again to the day. But, in the mean time, in the first contest within the walls of the city, he was struck to the heart by an arrow, and died on the instant, with no word of disclosure on his lips of where his treasures lay hidden. Thou wast then an innocent

and helpless child, protected by the good genii, and had never been known as his son. Thy father was ancient when he died: thy mother, who was fair as the houris and beautiful as light, came into his path, and more from the love of thy father's gold than thy father, wedded herself to his bed. But she reaped not the corn she thought she had so securely sown; for the old merchant perceived too soon that the eye of her design looked into his coffers, and he then began to loathe where he had begun to like. Thou, poor child of sin, wast born in the rising of that moon which set on thy father's grave, and wast never acknowledged as his son; for indeed he never beheld thee, nor did he know of thy birth, else perhaps his heart, though locked and sealed with avarice, might have opened at beholding the son of his old age, and melted to pity of thy innocent helplessness: but it was ordained otherwise, and Heaven is just! Thy miserable mother died in giving thee life, and thou wast all-deserted, except by the succouring hand of Providence, who poured the milk of a mother between thy little lips from the bosom of a stranger; and thus thou wast reared to live, and, from an infant, became that goodly tree, when its fruits are good, a man. The hardness, and neglect, and poverty of thy youth thou thyself art acquainted withal —I need not, therefore, remember them for thee; but think not that they were unobserved, or that they will go unrewarded: no, for thou hast never shown the vices of thy parents, but hast lived soberly and honestly

by the unprofitable sweat of thy brow—not, indeed, without some murmurings at thy poor estate, yet still with no wicked impugning of the wiser will of Heaven, which better knows and regulates than man what it shall give, and what it shall take away. These virtues are now to be rewarded. Know, then, that the treasure which thou didst this day discover was a part only of the wealth of thy father, a little part, for under the same wave thou shalt find still twenty more jars of gold and precious jewels, each one worth a monarch's crown and a king's ransom."

Here Haroun started violently from his couch; but the dream had chained his senses too fast to suffer him to awake.—The beneficent Being continued. "Be wise, Haroun, in thy happiness, and be tongueless in thy secrecy. Let the king, thy master, enjoy in quietness the treasures he has claimed, so shall he not disturb thee in the possession of the treasures which still are thine. These thou wilt bring up from the bosom of the waters by night, letting none but the two elder of the boys now thy children know the secret of their concealment; for these, by a charm I will place upon their tongues, shall be trustworthy, though they were the sons of one whom honesty might never trust. Be not too prodigal in the show of thy great fortunes, but live wisely, and then thou shalt not fail to live virtuously;—for who that is wise but must understand the worth of virtue, so as resolutely to eschew evil. Be a husband to the women thy wives, who may be brought back to goodness.

for there is nothing so vile but has a seed of virtue in it, which, though it lie half-rooted in the bosom, as upon stony ground, may, with the culture of a careful hand, become instinct with being, and bring forth excellent fruits in due season. To their children be more than their father; for he would have made them the ministers of evil, but let it be thy task to make them the ministers of good: they are as yet uncorrupted by the example of their father, being innocently young, and may become the olive-branches of thy table, and the examples of the young yet unborn. Go, and bring forth a twentieth part of thy treasures; be wise in husbanding them, be wary in concealing them; be generous, above all things, in their use, especially to the poor, whom thou, who hast pined under poverty, must naturally pity, knowing what wretches suffer in their need. Be not lifted with pride, nor poor with too much riches, and thus shalt thou be as great as thou hast ever dreamed to be, and as happy as heaven can render thee on earth, and blessed with the blessed hereafter. Arise, Haroun—be happy thyself, and make the poor and miserable happy!"

Here the good Genius ceased, and Haroun, as he dreamed, made many a holy promise to the strict performance of her will. He arose, as he thought, from the ground—and being motioned to depart for his home, he touched his forehead reverently with both hands, again bowed his face to the earth, and when he lifted his eyes once more to gaze upon the beautiful and beneficent Being, she was gone like the dew from a

sun-kissed stone." At this he started so violently that he awoke, and looking about him, beheld that the chamber was illumined by a light which did not seem the light of day—it was more beautiful; and he heard audibly a faint hum as of receding music, which died gradually away like the last breathings of an expiring perfume. He could hardly believe that he had dreamed, but rather imagined that he had had audience of the good spirit's minister where he then lay, and not in the valley which his vision had placed him in. However, whether delusive dream or waking certainty, he resolved to examine further into the river, and leaping hastily from his couch, and slipping on his pelisse, slippers, and cap, he left the house alone and quietly, and bent his way eagerly to the river's brink, as fast as impatience, that fast-footed mule, could carry him.

It was not yet sunrise, although it was early day, and no one was yet abroad. Arrived at the spot of all his hopes, he prostrated himself, and breathed a hasty prayer; then stripping himself in a moment, he dived like a diamond-slave to the bottom, when, swimming under water downward toward the sea, the first object which he met was the bloated body of the robber, lying entangled among the weeds. He recollected the diamonds he had yesterday snatched from the jar, and determined on bringing him again to the light: this was soon done, and he dragged him ashore; the dagger was still fast clutched in one hand, and the diamonds in the other. Haroun forced open his death-frozen fingers, extracted the glittering prisoners, and then left

him on the sands as if newly washed up, with the dagger still pointed in his hand, which would serve to confirm the story of his death. He could not help looking with pity on him, once the terror of the honest and the slayer of the harmless, and could hardly forbear shedding a tear over his lifeless body, as terrible in death as it was in life. He then plunged again into the stream, and explored the bed of it for some time without success, when, just as he was beginning to despair, and, wearied with fatigue, had crawled up the bank, intending to search no farther, convinced that his dream was all a delusion, he beheld, a little lower down, a small golden-scaled fish leap out of the blue waters, and then drop in again; and the next instant this was followed by the gushing upward of a thousand drops of water of a diamond-like lustre and beauty. "O, excellent spirit!" he exclaimed; "if I understand the true meaning of these indications, the golden fish shows me where the gold lies, and the water-drops where the diamonds lie darkly buried." The fish leaped up once more, and the water sprang up like a fountain, and fell in twice a thousand drops into the very circle which their last agitations had made on the surface of the stream. He was now convinced, and leaping in, swam to the spot marked out for his search by the rippling rings which still widened on the surface: then diving down, he beheld, as well as the water getting into his eyes would permit him, the twenty jars, standing like so many funeral urns of the ancient dead, side by side in a row, as if they had been fixed there by

some strong-handed power. It was enough—he was satisfied—so getting out of the river, he hurried on his few garments, and hastened home like one distracted, where arriving, he called up his wives, who had not yet shaken off the fingers of Sleep from their lids; they heard his call and awoke. "Be happy, my wives, be happy, and bless the gracious and good Alla! for you are the favourites of heaven and all good spirits." They understood not his words nor his wild looks; but nevertheless they seemed happy enough that they had lost their late lord and tyrant for a merry and gamesome young fellow.

"Call up my children," commanded Haroun, "for I must see them directly, that they may know that they have a father who is a father from heaven to them! Call the little rascals my children-chickens hither, for I have some crumbs of comfort will make each of their two eyes to sparkle with the lustre of four stars, and their lips to tingle with shouting. Go, bring them before me, go—I long to embrace the young rogues, whilst my heart is overflowing with human kindness for them—ay, and for all mankind—go, my good wives, go!" The wives stared and wondered, and, what is extraordinary, though they were inquisitive, did not ask a question of Haroun as to the meaning of his extravagance. As for him, he dropt from exhaustion on the carpet which had been his bed in the morning. He seized his kaleoon, and attempted to sooth the hubbub of his mind into calmness by its brain-appeasing fumes. At that moment the children entered with

child-like shyness and awe of their new father. They were a handsome, lively nest of young rogues; and Haroun's good-natured eyes assured them that they had nothing to fear from him, for they ran over with humanity, and a yearning tenderness for their innocent, helpless state. His good-looking and good-humoured face, too, was all over one smile of pleasure and satisfaction; and his voice like a song of love: so that in a few moments he was half choked by their caresses, and half smothered by the young urchins themselves, who rolled and clambered up him and over him as he squatted on the carpet, like so many playful whelps about their father the lion. These indications exhibiting, as decidedly as he could have wished, their opinion of the new father in preference of the old one, he kissed them twenty times all round; and telling the boys that they should become princes, and the girls empresses, he dismissed them to their breakfast of rice and romping, and calming himself as well as he might, bade his wives array themselves in costly robes, if they had any, and if not, to command the immediate presence of the silk merchant, that they might be attired as became the wives of the richest poor man in Shiraz, for they must set out for the mosque that morning, to have all the rites, which were to transfer them to their new lord, duly solemnized, as became a good Mussulman. At this news the wives kissed him very kindly on both cheeks, and having set a breakfast of fowl and fruit and a pleasant liquor before him, they retired to dress themselves as their beauty de-

served. Ere he had finished his meal they returned; and truly they might, by their comeliness, have graced the house of a much greater lord than Haroun Schemzeddin, the basket-maker of Shiraz.

And now, to sum up the fortunes of Haroun the Lonely Man, now no longer so, he honourably married the four wives of Abou Benzaddin the robber, adopted their children as his, had sons and daughters of his own by them; and having drawn up the twenty jars at cautious intervals of time, became gradually the richest merchant in Persia, and none knew how, unless, as was conjectured, he had been rewarded by some good Genius for his patient endurance of poverty, and the humane willingness with which he submitted to the tender severity of the law, in becoming the father of the children of Abou Benzaddin. He lived to a good old age, and was known to all parts of the trading-world for the rare and exceeding worth of the diamonds he dealt in; he acquired the title of 'the happy man of Shiraz,' instead of his old gloomy title; and the king came purposely from Ispahan to visit him, and was wonderstruck at his exceeding riches, happiness, and generosity. His sons became a glory to him, for some of them were wiser than most men, and all were virtuous; and some became, as his ambitious spirit had dreamed, princes, for in their travels through the cities of the East in search of adventures, they were admired by the princesses of the several courts at which they were distinguished visiters, for their prowess and hand-

some persons: and the daughters either became princesses, or were the wives of the richest merchants of the world, and lived in splendour and honour. And then Haroun, having seen nearly every thing accomplished which he had ambitiously desired, died in peace with all men, and beloved by all; is to this day the proudest name and example among the merchants of Shiraz; and over his tomb, constructed of the richest and most costly materials, is still to be seen, engraved on a plate of gold, his dying words:—'*It was to be, and it is, and every thing is as it should be.*'

THE HUMOUROUS MAN.

You shall know the man I speak of by the vivacity of his eye, the 'morn-elastic' tread of his foot, the lightness of his brow, and the dawning smile of pleasantry in his countenance. The muscles of his mouth, unlike those of Monsieur Melancholy, (whose mouth has a 'downward drag austere,') curl upward like a Spaniard's mustachios. He is a man who cares for nothing so much as a 'mirth-moving jest;' give him that, and he has 'food and raiment.' He *will* not see what men have to care for, beyond to-day; and is for To-morrow's providing for himself. He is also for a new reading of Jonson's old play of '*Every Man in his Humour;*' he would have it '*Every Man in Humour.*' He leaves money and misery, to misers; ambition and blood to warriors and highwaymen; fame, to court-laureates and lord-mayors; honours, to court-panders and city knights; the dread of death, to such as are not worthy of life; the dread of heaven, to those who are not good enough even for earth; the grave, to parish-clerks and undertakers; tombs, to proud worms; and palaces to paupers.

It is enough for him if he may laugh the 'hours away;' and break a jest, where tempers more *humourous* break a head. He would not barter with you one wakeful jest for a hundred sleepy sermons; or one laugh for a thousand sighs. He says, that if he could allow himself to sigh about any thing, it would be that he had been serious when he might have laughed; if he could weep for any thing, it would be for mankind, because they will not laugh more and lament less. Yet he hath tears for the orphan and the unhappy; but his tears die even where they are born,—in his 'heart of hearts;' he makes no show of them; like April showers, they refresh where they fall, and turn to smiles, as all tears will that are not selfish. His grief has a humanity in it, which is not satisfied with tears only; it teaches him the difference between poverty and riches, between wealth and want, and moves his heart to pity, and his hand to charity. He loves no face more than a smiling one; a needlessly serious one serves him for the kindling of his wit,—as cold flints strike out sparks of fire.

His humour shows itself to all men and on all occasions. I found him once bowing on the stairs to a poor alarmed devil of a rat, who was cringing up in a corner; he was offering him the retreat honourable, with a polite "After you, Sir, if you would oblige me." I settled the point of etiquette, by kicking the rat down stairs, and received a frown from my humane friend, for my impatient inhumanity. It must have been my

humourous friend, and not the atrabilarious Bard of Twickenham, who, coming to a corn-field, pulled off his hat, and bowing profoundly, requested of his wheaten audience, that, as he was a poor poet, they would lend him their ears.

His opinions of men and things have some spice of singularity in them. He conceives it to be a kind of puppyism in pigs that they wear tails. He defines a great coat to be a modern *Spenser*, in folio, with *tail-pieces*. He calls Hercules a man-midwife, in a small way of business; because he had but twelve labours. He can tell you why Horace ran away from the battle of Philippi: it was to convince the Romans that he was not a lame poet. He describes critics to be a sort of door-keepers to the temple of fame; and says it is their business to see that no persons slip in with holes in their stockings, or paste buckles for diamond ones—not that they always perform this duty honestly.

He asserts that the highest delight on this side the grave, is to possess a pair of bagpipes, and know that no one within forty miles can play them. Acting up to this whim, he bought a pair of a Scotch bagpiper, a poor Highlander, giving him five guineas for them; which, as he boasted, sent him home like a gentleman to Scotland, where he had, no doubt, purchased a landed estate, and was in a probable way of coming into parliament for a Scotch borough. And here he somewhat varied the old proverb, by saying,

that "It was an ill bagpipe that blowed nobody good." Indeed, if he quotes a proverb at all, it is, 'with a difference.'

He is a polite man, though a wit—which is not what wits usually are; they would rather lose a life than a joke. I have heard him express his detestation of those wits who sport with venomed weapons, and wish them the fate of Laertes, who, in his encounter with Hamlet, had his weapon changed, and was himself wounded with the poisoned foil designed for his antagonist. I mean by saying he is a polite man, that he is naturally, not artificially, polite; for the one is but a handsome, frank-looking mask, under which you conceal the contempt felt for the person you seem most diligent to please; it is a gilt-edged envelope to a blank valentine; a shell without a nut; a courtezan in a fair Quaker's chaste *satinity* and smooth sleekness; the arch devil in a domino:—the other is, as he describes it, taking the hat and cloak of your heart off, and standing uncovered and unconcealed in the presence of worth, beauty, or any other amiable quality.

Thus he unites humour with seriousness, and seriousness with humour.

In short, he is a humane man; and humanity is the only true politeness. I have seen him ridicule that politeness which contents itself with bowing and bending the back very humourously. In walking through his garden, a tree or tall flower, touched by the passing wind, bowed its head towards him: his

hat was immediately off, and the bow returned with an old-school ceremoniousness and etiquette that would, perhaps, have cured Lord Chesterfield, that fine polisher of exteriors, of some of his hollow notions of manners. In this spirit, I saw him bow very profoundly to the giants, as he passed under St. Dunstan's church. He had asked his friend what was the hour; but before he could reply, the giants had informed him: "Thank you, gentlemen," said he, bowing to them with a graceful humour.

I have said he is a humane man. He once detected an unintimate cat picking his cold mutton, 'on a day, alack the day!' for he was then too poor to spare it well. Some men would have thrown a poker at her; others would have squandered away a gentlemanly income of oaths, and then have sworn by private subscription all the rest of their lives; an absent man would perhaps have thrown his young son and heir, or his gold watch and seals, at her; another, perhaps, his wig:—he contented himself with saying, "I have two or three doubts (which I shall put forth as much in the shape of a half-crown pamphlet as possible) as to the propriety of your conduct in eating my mutton;" and then he brushed her off with his handkerchief, supped with his head out of window, and went happy to bed.

Some of his jokes have a practicality about them; but they have neither the quarter-staff jocoseness of Robin Hood, that brake heads let them have been never so obtuse and profound; nor the striking effect

of that flourishing sprig of the Green Isle, that knocks down friend and foe with a partiality truly impartial.

He is no respecter of persons: the beggar may have a joke of him, (and something better,) though he do not happen to apply exactly 'between the hours of eleven and four.'

At dinner, there is but one glass on the table; his lady apologizes for her seeming negligence;—"Time, my dear, hath no more than one glass; and yet he contrives to see all his guests under the table—kings, lord-mayors, and pot-boys."

If he lends you a book, for the humour of the thing, he will request you, as you love a clean conscience, to make no thumb-and-butter references in the margin; and will, moreover, ask you whether you have studied that modern 'art of book-keeping' which has superseded the 'Italian method,' namely, of never returning the books you borrow?

He has a very ingenious mode of putting names and significations on what he calls the brain-rack, and dislocating their joints into words: thus tortured and broken into pieces, *Themistocles* loses his quality, but increases his quantity, and becomes *the Miss Tokeleys;* the *Cyclades,* by the same disorder, become *sick ladies;* a '*delectable* enjoyment' is a *deal-legged-table* pleasure, &c. &c., pun without end. These are what he denominates *punlings.*

For his puns, they fall as thick from him as leaves from autumn bowers. Indeed, he talked, some time since, of petitioning for the office of pun-purveyor to

his Majesty; but ere he had written 'and your petitioner shall ever' *pun*, it was bestowed on the yeoman of the guard. He still, however, talks of opening business as pun-wright in general to his Majesty's subjects, for the diffusion of that pleasant small ware of wit; and intends to advertise puns wholesale, retail, and for exportation.

His wit is what he describes the true wit to be: it is brilliant and playful as a fencing-foil; it is as pointed too, and yet it hurts not; it is as quick at a parry, and as harmless at a thrust. But it were a vanity in me to attempt to pourtray my humourous friend, so that all who run may know him. His likeness cannot be taken: you might as well hope to paint the cameleon of yesterday by the cameleon of to-day; or ask it as a particular favour of a flash of lightning to sit for half an hour for a whole-length portrait; or Proteus to stand while you chiselled out a personification of Immutability. He is ever-changing, and yet never changed. I cannot reflect back, by my dim mirror, the 'flashings and out-breakings of his fiery mind,' when he is in what he terms 'excellent fooling' (but it is, to my thinking, true wisdom); sparkle follows sparkle, as spark followed spark from the well-bethumped anvil of patten-footed Vulcan. I give up the attempt.

This is the humourous, and therefore happy, man. Dost envy him, thou with the rugged brow, and pale, dejected cheek? When fortune frowns at thee, do thou laugh at her: it is like laughing at the threaten-

ings of a bully,—it makes her think less of her power over thee. Wouldst thou be such a man, single-hearted Selfishness, who hast no sympathy with the suffering, no smile with the happy? Feel less for thyself, and more for others, and the happiness of others shall make thee happy.

As he has walked up the hill of life with an equal pace, and without any breathless impatience for, or fear of, the prospect beyond, and the journey has been gentle and serene, so, I have no doubt, will be the end of it. Wishing him, and all who contribute to the happiness of their fellow-men, either by good-humour, or goodness of any kind, the same silent conclusion to a noiseless life, I shake his and their hands; and, while the journey lasts, may they have May for their weather, and as many flowers for the roadside as Flora can afford to those who will stoop for them; and inns of plenteousness and joy, at which to sojourn, &c. &c.

RETRIBUTION;

THE DREAM OF A DERVISH.

THE sun was slowly sinking; and the stately acacias, standing apart upon the hill on which I was reposing, chequered and streaked the ground with their long lines of shadow. Silence was in the air and on the earth; and the repose of a serene mind made still more calm and beautiful the beauty and the calm which heaven had thrown on all things around me.

I had been meditating on that many-handled sceptre, the power of wrong, and on the million possessors and abusers of it; and on that weak rush of right, which sometimes feebly opposes it—when by degrees I became drowsily confused with the most incoherent and contradictory half-waking and half-dreaming thoughts, and, at last, fell back into the arms of that gentle mother, Sleep, and was no sooner fast folded in her embrace, than this dream came upon me.

Méthought I wandered through a delicious country, where nature was so prodigal of her bounties, that man had little more to do than sit serenely under the shade of his own olive-trees, or walk in his vineyards, and take her gifts as he wanted them, and as they fell

at his feet, or hung within the reach of his hand. The land literally teemed spontaneously with the simple luxuries of life; and its people seemed happy, innocent, pleased with the past and the present, and blindly dreadless of any evil that was to come on them in the future. I journeyed on and on; but wherever I went I could no where find want, no where hear the murmur of discontent, nor any where see oppression either of the simple and mild governors over the simple people, or of the people over each other. Happy country! thought I, in my dream;—here will I rest, and enjoy the few years of life in this sylvan valley, far from the tyrants of the wider world, and far from its vileness, wickedness, and want. Methought that here I sat me down on a beautiful hill which overlooked the vineyarded valley, and soon fell asleep; and having slept a time, again awoke, when all that I had seen of the happiness, content, and plenty of this pleasant valley was changed into the saddest and veriest reverse. The vineyards were all razed, and trampled down by the marching of the horses and men of an army of invaders, who were traversing that fruitful land; and I saw that its plenty-fed people were flying in all quarters from the slaying swords of their oppressors; and that others were dying or dead, in ineffectually opposing them.

Methought, then, that I saw that haggard monster Want, rear her pale, emaciated form from out the ruins of that people's harvest, and stalk over their

fields; and wherever she appeared, the affrighted people who had escaped the sword, fell at her feet, and died, like victims under the car of the cruel god of the Brahmins. I wept to see so beautiful a land deformed and laid waste by these polished barbarians of rapine and ravage; and in the anger of my grief, cursed those wanton spoilers of what they did not enjoy, and seemed only to have pleasure in destroying, that they might show this harmless people that they possessed the power of making their fellow-men miserable, and the father-land of their birth less happy to them than the grave of their death. And now these marauders, having murdered the most of the people, and seized their rural treasures, drove off the cattle from their pastures, and sent them before their retreating forces to a city which was beyond the hills of the valley.

And now, methought, there suddenly appeared before me, as if she had come out of the angry earth, insulted and outraged by those brutal tramplers of its fertility and fruits, one of those glorious Beings who appear to men from the heavens; and who, after gazing on me with a smile of divine regard, addressed me in these words:—

"Thou weepest the devastation made in this lovely valley; and thou hast seen the wrongs which man inflicts on man, because he has the power to do them, and wants not the will. Thou hast seen in this an example of the lawlessness of all power underived from heaven—thou hast seen it, and I beheld thee

weep over it; be wise as thou art piteous, and learn from it."

"Gracious Genius," I replied, with deep reverence, "I have already learned to hate the tyrants and the tyranny of unlawful power; and, if it were mine to do so glorious a deed, would revenge it!"

"Sayest thou truly, O excellent mortal! and wouldest thou, indeed, do it, if gifted with retributory power?"

"I would, so hear me, heaven, and all good spirits!"

"Know then," said the fair Vision, "I am the Genius of Retribution; and have entrusted to me a power from the great Good who created even those lawless men of might, and lent them the gift which they have thus abused, to punish and retaliate, to the full, the injuries they have poured upon the heads of their harmless neighbour-men. If thou wilt serve me like a true minister, I will bestow on thee an irresistible power to retribute on them the desolation they have done; but not by ravage and rapine shall they be rewarded according to their deserts, but by a subtler, but as sure, influence. Go thou beyond these once pleasant hills and this viny valley, and there thou shalt behold, in the vast plain, a great city, peopled with those wicked men of might. There dwell in prodigal pride the rulers of the warriors who have ravaged under thine eyes those harmless dwellers among the vine and the olive; and who gave the word to set upon this defenceless people, and crush their purple plenty under their feet, and drive them from the ancient

hearths of their homes to thraldom and death. As for those who were the common dogs and blood-hounds of the war, leave them to the punishment they will meet with from one another: they shall fall by the ears together, for the booty they have acquired, and so tear out each other's hearts, till one by one a retributive punishment is done on them. But work thou my will upon their rulers: go thou into their pompous palaces, which, by my aid, shall be as open to thee as is the air; and there, unseen of all, with this talisman which I here give thee, strike them with the severest stripes of my wrath, and change their conquest of others into a defeat of themselves; and all the treasures which they have ravished away from those contented dwellers of the vine-valley, into deadly delights and poisoned pleasures. The talisman which I have given thee has the virtue to transmute every thing which it shall touch, to the gross opposite of the state in which it is when touched by it. Use it wisely, and spare not the use of it; but touch not, as thou valuest the love of heaven, any who have not done this wrong—for thou shalt find these. Forbear the virtuous and the innocent, and thou shalt perform the good I appoint thee to do, and bring thyself a good which hereafter thou shalt enjoy among the angels who never were of earth, and the just men who were, but now are eternal heirs of heaven."

At these words, methought that the solid earth opened to a slow and solemn strain of music, which arose like a rich essence into the air; and a radiant and

excessive light spread like a curtain around the good Genius, and enveloped her in a glory, which made her as impalpable to sight as if the dunnest clouds of darkness had veiled her disappearing. The music gradually melted into soundless air; the thick, concentrated light broke into separate beams, which shot out a thousand ways, like so many suddenly-discharged arrows—each particular ray darting off into the indistinct distance, till it was no longer visible, but had melted into the universal light. I looked at the earth where it had opened, but it showed no line of fracture; and starting to my feet, from the kneeling reverence into which I had bended, from deep awe of her solemn presence and glorious departure, and drawing my regular breath again, which had respired irregularly as if in fear, I looked once again on the dreary and desolate valley whose cause I was to revenge. Then placing the talisman in my breast, which was to give me the power to work this retribution, I set off for the city beyond the hills; and in a few moments, as I thought, in the oblivious indistinctness and hurry of my dream, found myself in the heart of it, without remembering to have passed through its gates.

It was a mighty heart of life and luxury, of lewdness and lawlessness. I looked about for the palace of the great ruler, for there was the court of my mission; and by the aid of my talisman, which led me to it as it had been my will, coming up to the golden gates of a lofty house, that seemed by its height as it would look into the heavens, I was impelled through them (though

stout-ribbed with massy thicknesses of iron, and strong as the gates of Gaza,) as if they were but unsubstantial shadows, or I the most subtile of spirits. There was a noise of rout and revelry within, as I entered like the glancing of light, and, unperceived as death, floated with an aërial motion, rather than walked. I passed into the principal hall, where stood a sumptuous board, on which were piled vessels of sculptured agate and yellow amber, moulded into the most fantastic forms for the most frivolous uses. And, among these, again, were gorgeous ewers of silver, and wine cups, and vases, and dishes of elaborate gold, serving a rich entertainment, such as the voluptuous Sardanapalus or the gluttonous Apicius never sat unto, which sent up a smoke and steam as of a sacrifice and incense to sin and self-indulgence. And about the table, sat in a circle the great rulers of the city of the oppressors—the powerful men and insolent lords; and over all, the king of those proud despoilers. Great was the exultation and the glee of these banqueting robbers; but greater was the gluttony, and the quaffing of the richest and rarest wines, from the rosiest grapes and the ripest fruits of the East, and the West, and the South, and from the farthest and most reputed parts of the world. But, in the midst of their banqueting, I drew the talisman from my breast, and striking the air with it in anger, as it were made impure by visiting there, in an instant the gorgeous scene changed, with a loud shriek of dismay and terror from the assembled revellers, into all imaginable coarseness and disgustingness. The

savoury meats took in a moment the look of those dead carcases which are seen without the walls and within the ditches of great cities; and the fragrant steams, which fumed up from them as from so many carnal censers, turned to noisome vapours and deathly stenches. The golden and silver dishes, which held those meats no longer dainties, next melted from under them;—the gold ones into a drossy dust, like the yellow earth called ochre; the silver into base and unsightly lead, in which the lately-heated viands lay cold and corpse-like, and disgusting both to the eye and to the nostrils. The red wines paled into the colourless hue of common water, and were no racier in taste; the ripe fruits of the sunny South changed also—the grapes swelled their luscious bags of wine till they burst like chestnuts in a winter-fire, and instead of a delicious juice, threw out a stench as of suffocating sulphur; and every fruit and delicious cate was in like manner changed, and made utterly filthy.

The pale king and his scared nobles sat awhile, and beheld all these transformations with a dismal and speechless awe and idiot wonder. But now came the moment of their mutability. With one motion of the talisman, the whole of the living things present changed, still into creatures of life, but into the most abject and mis-shapen forms of life. Their rich furs, and pearly-shining satins, and rustling robes of silk, with all their ornaments of gems and gold and precious workmanship, changed into ragged robes of the coarsest frieze; their waists, instead of being bound about with bands

of a golden-threaded web, and fastened with clasps of precious stones, wore the faquir's rope of the roughest hemp; and from looking bloated and apoplectically crammed with the rarest wines and the daintiest viands, their looks became thin and starved as the sallow Abstinence—their riot and mad mirth mute and mournful; and they were altogether abject, miserable, and mighty-fallen. Another motion of the talisman, and this stately palace became a wretched hospital of Mercy; the downy and luxurious couches, whereon the pampered slaves of sensuality and silken indolence had lolled in proud and pursy state, turned to hard, iron beds of pain and penury, on which some of those lazy slave-helped lords lay, unattended now, and helpless of themselves, from palsied or paralyzed limbs.

Others of the insolent and proud nobles were now seen sitting like paupers around a lazar-house, or hospital for the houseless; and seemed waiting, as patiently as the lepers by the motionless waters of Bethesda, their turn for abject alms or charitable admission. But even this state of wretched life was not long to be allowed them. With another motion of the talisman, the hospital, in a few moments, as in many centuries, dwindled, with every living thing within it, into the thin dust of the Summer, and there was no more heard either mirth or moan; for all these mighty men in their day, and even the huge stones which heaped up that heavy palace upon the earth, were again level with the ground, and their dust was the plaything of the winds. And so I left the palace-site, satisfied with the retri-

bution that had come upon them 'like a thief in the night,' and come none knew whence.

And now, methought, I went forward farther into the city; and, in the great square of it, I beheld crowds holding a festival about the spoils which they had taken from the sylvan valley; and huge fires lit up the wide horizon over the city, for they had killed a hecatomb of the oxen which they had driven away from the lands of the sylvan people, and were roasting them at their fierce fires. But I came among them like a 'pestilence that walketh unseen;' and in an instant their fires were quenched with waters which founted up from the midst of them. And the captives from the happy valley, also, who had been led forth in chains, in the insolence of their triumph, and placed in the great square of feasting, not to be partakers, but to be tormented in their hunger with the sight of the plenty of their enemies, and with their festive happiness, started in freedom from their chains; and instead of being disarmed and dispirited slaves, were now armed, and instinct with the courage of roused lions; and routed and slew their swordless oppressors wherever they rushed; and, finally, fought their way out of the city, having slain thousands in their path. And when they had arrived at the southern gate, and were fully free from their enthrallers, they again changed to their former pastoral harmlessness, their sword of slaughter becoming nothing more deadly than a herdsman's staff, and their revengeful blood-thirstiness a satisfied gentleness and thankfulness of heart, that they had passed

through the waters of tribulation, like another Israel, and had re-conquered their right from the hand of wrong. And so they passed quietly out at the great gate in the south.

And now, methought, I returned into the heart of the city; and wherever I went, all things about me were changed and influenced by the all-changing power I bore as the minister of Retribution. The young men, who were now armed and rushing from all quarters, to defend their city from the destructive slaughter which had so suddenly started up in the midst of it, as they passed by me, dropped their strong-sinewed knees into the stiff, nerveless bend of tottering old age; their thick arms became powerless; their savage hands, which had grasped their swords as if they were stronger than their steel, fumbled each one of them with feeble fingers an old man's staff; their youth and strength fell altogether old and impotent; and their tongues, instead of shouting 'onward to the slaughter!' became garrulous and weak, and whistled their small thin voices to no end, since none heard them, and none attended to them; for the already old, who were now made older, heard only their own shrieks of dismay, which were not more audible than the pulsations of their fearful hearts. And in the wildness of their terror, and the weakness of the sudden age which had seized their bodies and minds, they fell against each other as they tottered in their childishness through the highways, and falling, died.

And wherever I went the tall and lofty houses, each

a stately palace, crumbled down to the earth; the marble-paved streets became like deserted fields, where an enemy had been ravaging; and desolation, and the weeds of the wilderness, and an unhuman loneliness seemed to spread every where. And now I struck off by the western ways of this vast city: there, as I had not yet been among them, the retributive destruction had not reached, and the city presented the eye with one half a desert, and the other a sublime mass of splendid halls and palaces, towers, temples, and terraces—streets wide as vast rivers, and groves and gardens beautiful as those of Eden; but as I went among them all things changed around, till nothing was as it had been,—and sudden decay and desolation spread every where, every substantial thing taking its original chaos of shape, and becoming clay, formless clay, again.

And now the liberated inhabitants of the valley, as they journeyed towards their home, looked behind for the towers in which they had been captives; but they were no more to be seen, for where that city of power had dwelt was now a wide and desolate plain; and they saw nothing but the dust of its destruction, flying like a wind-driven cloud over it. And they marvelled much, and went on their way singing to Heaven a hymn of thankfulness for their wonderful deliverance. And soon they had passed over the southern hills which had towered over the proud city on the one side, and the humble and happy valley on the other, but which now saw only the flourishing valley and the desolated city;

and, lifting my eyes to Heaven, I looked again, and saw no more of them.

And now that the work of my mission was done, I trembled at the power I possessed; and a great fear came over me, and a thought that if I went farther into the world, and to other cities, I should leave the same desolation wherever I went; and, more than all, I dreaded lest the power I held of doing this retributive good should lead me into the doing of any evil; and in the agony of that thought, I prostrated myself reverently, and prayed the good Genius who had given me this power to take it from me, and let me depart a humble man, to dwell out my days among the innocent people of the happy valley. And when I lifted my eyes from the ground, behold the good Genius stood before me, and comforted my troubled spirit with these words:—

"Excellent minister of retribution, thou hast well performed my master's will; and now thy task is done, and for thy reward thou shalt be happy here, and blessed with the angels hereafter. The talisman with which thou hast wrought all these things no longer has the virtue it possessed: look on it, and thou shalt perceive it to be a mere worm, to show thee that Heaven can work its mightiest will with the meanest instrument."

And I looked into my hand, and behold there was a common glow-worm crawling within it, instead of the talisman which had seemed composed of a cluster of jewels more precious than diamonds. "I wonder, adore, and am humble!" I exclaimed, falling again

upon the earth. But the good Genius raised me up, and bade me take my way to the happy valley, and live there till I was called of heaven. Saying these words she vanished, like an evening sun-beam suddenly withdrawn from the earth into the heavens. And I wondered a space, and then went on my way to the hill looking over the happy valley, where I had, as I thought, fallen asleep; and when I had reached it, I awoke,—and behold I had dreamed a wild and wayward dream.

THE AWKWARD MAN.*

I AM, among the familiar few of my acquaintance, denominated 'The Awkward Man;' and I have never demurred at the title, but have worn it with as good-natured an acquiescence in the justness of the appellation as self-suspicion, amounting almost to self-conviction, could bring me to. Awkwardness with these, or bashfulness with the more delicate and sentimental, or *mauvaise honte* with the French, is in a man, to a certain degree, degrading, as it unfits him for well-bred society, renders him miserable to himself, and deprives him of giving that happiness to others which should spring from a communion of hearts, and agreeableness of manners. Boldness (that modest degree of it which is not to be mistaken for assurance) is as necessary to the character of a man, as modesty is to that of a woman. Manners too bold are certainly offensive;

* In this paper, the Author appears to have sacrificed the etiquette of fashionable life to the humour (if there be any) of the incidents. The Editor thinks it necessary to point this out, that the reader may be prepared to meet with more of farce than fashion in the following attempt to delineate such traits of *mauvaise honte* as a mere learned clown might possibly exhibit in his first commerce with the polite world.

THE AWKWARD MAN.

but the want of a sensible boldness, perhaps, shows a want of sense.

Should chance throw an awkward man into polished company, at his *entrée* he is as much a matter of polite silent surprise to them, as the fall of Apollo was to the goatherds he dropped among, when he was flung out of Heaven for contempt of court and disregard of the frowning old Thunderer. Well-bred people perceive, in the very entrance of an unpolished man, a painful preluding of the awkwardness which is to annoy them through the time of his stay with them, in spite of all their silent determinations not to seem to notice his slips of behaviour, and their humane intention of striving, against their convictions, to make him think that they do not perceive anything remarkable or disagreeable in his conduct, or awkward and rugged in his person. At his bow, they discern embarrassment in every movement of foot, head, and body; and though, as I have said, they will not seem to notice it, he thinks they do, and that is sufficient for him,—a bad impression being, as he supposes, once undoubtedly made, it will not be easy for him to rub it off by any after-polishing. He makes his awkward way to the chair which is set for him; but his courage failing him in the ordeal of running the gauntlet of a standing circle of polite persons, he drops into the chair of some one who has politely moved from his ground, to let him pass to his seat with more of what is called, among boys at play, 'horse-room and cart-room' freedom.

He is, at last, to the ease of all parties present, safely seated, after having tilted his chair, first on its second fore-leg, and secondly on its third hind-leg; and the company resume their chairs again, with that sort of subsiding alarm of feelings which a bevy of elderly peeresses feel, when they are waiting in their sedans at St. James's for their turn of *entrée*, and the Lord Mayor's horses take fright at a troop of Life-Guards, bursting on their unaccustomed eyes with bannerets and blazonry, carbines and cuirasses, and all the panoply of war in the piping times of peace.

Our awkward man being safely seated, the conversation is taken up just were it dropped, as Penelope took up the web of her weaving, after having been disturbed for a space by the entrance of some clownish courtier to her domestic hearth and delicate graces. And now Mynheer Awkward, should he gain sufficient courage to utter a sentence upon the subject on the *tapis*, it misses the board, like an ill-dealt card, and is as much out of place as his handkerchief, which at that moment has insensibly fallen from his hand on the carpet. But his auditors, from that genuine politeness which is the result of feeling, are determined to think well of his awkward attempt at pleasing, and smile favourably on his remark; and this smile (for such men are always fearful and suspicious) he construes into an elegantly-disguised sneer, or agreeably-masked deception. And now he makes up his mind to say 'no more at present,' and thus erects one of

those high-barred impediments which keep him, like a rough colt, on the barren common of constraint, when, by a courageous use of his powers, he might overleap all bars and banks, and fare sumptuously in the smooth, well-cultured paddocks of polite conversation. But, as Solomon hath no where said, "you may lead a horse to water, yet you cannot make him drink." And now he sits like one of those immovable marble men in the stone city and among the petrified people of Arabia, or, like the wall between some Pyramus and Thisbe who would willingly be nearer to each other, shuts out all intercommunion; and, like saw-dust between thin partitions, dulls the music of two sweet voices, which might, but for his marring, discourse most eloquent matter; or, like a fish-slice as a sandwich between two slices of bread and butter, serves only for something to grind your teeth upon, and set them on edge.

Yet, though I know the awkward man to be this senseless, stone-wall of separation between the church of Cupid and the synagogue of Separation, I am one of those insipid, dull creatures, who are so wise out of the world that they pass for fools in it. But I can better illustrate the character I begin to grow weary of playing in this excellent drama of life, yet cannot shuffle off, by relating my own adventures in this way.

I am, I confess it with some shame, as ignorant of the world as the world is of me; and have only been used to look at men as children look at an eclipse

—through glasses darkened and dulled with the smoke of my midnight lamp, which doth

> ——————— ' Oft outwatch the bear
> With thrice great Hermes, and unsphere
> The spirit of Plato, to unfold
> What worlds or what vast regions hold
> Th' immortal mind.'

But a kind yet mistaken friend of mine, who insisted that the ' proper study of mankind is man,' after numberless invitations, polite pressures, and gentle tuggings, pulled me up by the roots from my studious bower, as a gardener plucks up a thriving weed, disentangling my very heart-strings and eye-strings from the richly-cultured ground of the Muses' garden, and dragged me from my learned lair, to accompany him on a visit to some moderately-fashionable friends in town. It was not till after much hesitating, apologizing, and intreating him not to push me, so soon following my arrival in town, into that vortex which I dreaded—into gaieties so opposite to the seclusion in which I had passed my late pupilage in the west of England; till, after inquiring over and over again, whether they were *very* fashionable people? and being assured that it was a plain, worthy Scotch family, the widow and son and daughters of Colonel ——, who had but lately arrived in this country from the East Indies, where the gallant colonel had died, leaving them in very handsome circumstances,—that I submitted at last to go, with as good a grace as Barnardine did to be hanged; and it cost me as many efforts to step up to the

door,' as him to mount the steps of the scaffold.—The knock was given, the door opened; and my friend, (must I call him so?) perceiving that I would fain have retreated, dragged me in, as the young oxen were dragged into the temples of the ancients where they were meant to be sacrificed. We were in, however; and I passed very successfully along the line of cane and lap-dog carriers, and other gilt gentlemen of the shoulder-knot, without being openly quizzed; and I therefore began to augur favourably of my future success.

It was the chilly month of November, and we were ushered into a handsome dining-room, where were seated mine hostess, four or five elegant females, her daughters and their young companions, a captain of foot (her son), a fashionable clergyman, a beau cousin, and two sundries without any thing distinguishable about them, the whole party being very snugly circled round a warm, welcome-giving, autumnal fire, and earnestly employed over the dessert-table, as we were announced and entered. The whole company rose as we appeared, and with them rose my heart to my mouth: the courage I had felt in the hall slipped through my fingers like a live eel additionally oiled, or a buttered Chinese pursued by a Canton ship's-crew for naked night-rogueries. I made something like an oblique bow, which, for any thing I know to the contrary, was meant for the company present, but it might be mistaken to have been intended for the bust of Shakspeare on the side-board, as for the use I had

put it to. This would have passed unnoticed, had I not, in the first place, in retreating my right foot from a bow in advance, come with my heel, which was new-pumped, sharp against the shin of the footman who was politely waiting to see me to a chair;—had I not, in the second, in shaking hands with each one of the party on being introduced, nipped one of the young ladies' fingers almost in the bud, and dropped the hand of a second without shaking it, that I might grasp that of a third, who was waiting to go through the ordeal; and had I not, in the third place, shook the hand of the friend who had introduced me so long and so cordially, that you would have supposed I had never seen the man before in my life, instead of having been brought there by him. Whether I shook the captain's hand, and did, as my friend schooled me me afterwards for doing, refuse the clergyman's proffered hand with as much unconscious indifference as an atheist would feel for one of the cloth, I know not, for all the rest of my blunders were as much done in a dream as Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress was seen in one.

But we were at last securely seated; and my friend and I much blamed that we had not dined with them. "It was impossible," he said, and I felt glad that it was so. The wine was placed before us, and the captain, who sat on my right, paid me the compliment of taking, as he said, a glass with me, though, at the time, I certainly thought that I had been introduced to take a glass with him. But *n'importe*, as

the French say, in England, I felt inclined to toast the ladies, in the excess of my gallantry; but just as I had screwed up my courage tight to the peg, it cracked, as you have perhaps seen the first string to a fine cremona snap itself and a note in two, and have heard the imperfect sound die under the bow; so died my gallantry in my breast; and I congratulated myself the next minute on my forbearance, for there was no estimating what a long succession of awkward mistakes it might have led to. But the spirit of unaccustomed gallantry was still effervescing within, and I thought I might venture on being polite to the lady on my left. I watched her wants, therefore, with the eye of a lover, seeking occasion for saying some gallant thing, or for doing one. Her eyes, which were the prettiest pair of blue eyes I had ever seen out of poetry, settled upon a peach, like two sister butterflies of that azury hue which gives to the blue seraphs of the vales of Cashmere the sovereignty for beauty. I was all haste to serve her eyes, and so to win her heart; but darting my arm too hastily, I threw down a decanter of wine, whose issuing tide divided and subdivided itself into as many streams as you may sometimes see issuing from an allegorical urn in a county map. Great consternation ensued: the captain feared a stain on his military small-clothes, the clergyman on the sacerdotal cloth, and the ladies looked after the unsullied snow of their gowns with as much care as they would after their characters for spotless virtue. Many apologies were made by my blushing friend for my

blushing self, which was very handsome in him, as I was too confused to apologize for myself, and was fully employed in damming up the main stream with my handkerchief, till the assisting hand of a footman at my elbow, who was as welcome to me as the sun to the rain-drenched meadows, had dried up the vinous inundation. My friend lied for me like truth. I was first of all very near-sighted, and could not see across a table, though he had very often envied me the length of my sight; and next, I was very nervous, though he had often declared me to be too strong in our gymnastic exercises. The accident was soon forgotten, the company was again calm, and Awkward 'was himself again.'

As if with the kind intention of making me easy, my fair friend on my left began to be on the very best of terms with me, and said every thing that was agreeable, and nothing that could possibly remind me of disgrace. She was witty as wine, which in a woman is not expected, but is never disagreeable. I grew familiar, and said several sentences which were neither in Sterne nor in Sheridan; and she gave me so much encouragement, that I at last begged the honour of cracking for her a walnut, which had mastered the strength of her tender hands, and the teeth of her polished steel nut-crackers: I was honoured—and, like a boor, forgetting myself and delicacy too, I popped the nut between my teeth, and cracked it.

From this indelicate act arose this very diversified

choice of perplexities:—if I kept the nut, she might think me a greedy man; if I threw it away, and declared it to be a bad one, her eyes had seen it was good, and she must doubt my veracity; if I gave it back, she must needs think me a filthy, ill-bred fellow—in short, let me have done what I would with the nut, my reputation had been cracked with the shell of it. She, however, like a humane human creature, saw that I sat self-convicted of a fault in politeness, and beholding too my embarrassment, relieved me from all further perplexity, by declaring that nuts were crude, indigestible things, and, in her humorous way, began wondering what physician without patients first introduced them to the dessert-table; and I answered her question by surmising that it might be Dr. Squirrel. This poor pun saved me; and while she was laughing, I took occasion to slip the nut into my pocket, and resumed as much confidence as I could.

And now, by abstracting myself as much as possible from the whole circle, and confining myself to a *téte-à-téte* with my fair wit, though, in so doing, I was guilty of one breach of good manners, I was at least spared the mortification of committing twenty: this was my apology to myself; and I flattered myself that the company felt they were gainers in the end by my want of attention to them. Thus the dessert-hour passed to a safe conclusion, for I was guilty of no other impropriety than the one I have mentioned. But now came on the dreaded hour for tea, and now began my trepidations afresh.

If there is one species of circumstance in which I am more exquisitely awkward than another, it is in the polite etiquette of tea-table ceremonies. Oh! how I envy you, ye nice-handed Damons of the tea-board! ye insipid sippers of the fragrant lymph! ye man-millinery men, who coolly mince down the hot and nervous *liqueur* which 'not inebriates,' with nerves as true and well-tuned to your will as the strings of the violoncello of Lindley are to his exquisite hand! ye gallant cavaliers of high-dried, that so delicately and gracefully perform the ceremonies of a tea-party before the approving eyes of the attended fair! Oh how I envy ye the calm composure of your crossed knees and more composed faces, unruffled as the tea in your cups!—would I not give the dearest and most difficult-to-be-purchased Aldine classic out of my unique library to attain that easy jerk of your's, of one of two feet swinging over the knee of one of two legs! Ah, how I hope, and then despair, ever to attain to that perfection of precision, which enables you to lift your cups to your lips without striking and chipping off the brittle rims against your teeth;—that decision of hand and intention which makes you, instead of lifting the cup to the nose, to carry it to the expecting mouth, and no farther; and that, too, at one punctually-performed movement! But ah, I envy ye in vain; it is 'a grace beyond the reach of art.' A very clever poet in his day has said, that the gifts of reading and writing come through the hands of Nature,—so does the gift of drinking tea like a well-bred lady-like gen-

tleman. 'Men are born to excel each other in various ways. One man, who shall 'shake the senate or the bench,' shall not handle a cup of green tea without shaking himself; another, who shall wield a sword to the dissatisfaction of the enemies of his country, shall not hold a silver spoon at a tea-party without losing all his laurels, and being silently sneered at by all the male butterfly creatures that usually perch and flutter about the sugar basins and the other sweets of a tea-table; another, who shall solve the most perplexing problem in Euclid, shall not understand the mystery of a muffinet: so true it is, that one man is born to handle a silver tea-spoon, and another a wooden soup-ladle!'

The dreaded tea-torture was served up, and the first cup handed round by the politest of all possible footmen. Every thing went on well till the second cup. I had borne, with the patience of one of Fox's martyrs, the overflowings of the first full cup—which, owing to the unsteadiness of my hand, dropped like 'minute drops from off the eaves,' scalding my knees and legs; if no one observed it, no one should have heard mention of it; but my severest trial was reserved for the second cup. I was raising it with a faltering hand to my quivering lips, when all at once I felt a something warm and soft rubbing against my leg:—I paused, and looked down: it was a black cat, who was expressing her approbation of my visit, as I suppose, by rubbing her silky sides against my leg. Now there are but three things to which I have an antipathy: the first is

Dr. Daniel Doubledull, my late tutor; the second, sitting with five talkative Frenchmen in a small room; and the last, a black cat, which I never could consider as any other than an epitome of the devil on four feet, for the use of small families. No sooner had I ascertained 'the nature of the beast,' than, with a convulsive start, I bounced back, chair and all, against the dexter arm of a footman, at that moment passing behind me with a replenished tray. The wreck of bread and butter, and the crash of cups that followed, may be imagined, but cannot be described. Suffice it to say, that the cat was well scalded, the footman well scolded for what he could not help, and I well excused by my friend, who declared, with the most good-natured lying face in the world, that my mother had been frightened by a black cat in a muff-box, when I was a seven months' embryo; and, besides this, that there was a family antipathy to black cats, my mother being the granddaughter of the eccentric Bonnel Thornton, of 'cherry-coloured-cat' memory: neither of which circumstances were true, for I know not why I have an antipathy to black cats, nor do I know my mother's grandfather from Adam the First. These well-told falsehoods, however, served me so well, that every person present pitied me as the unhappy victim of an hereditary antipathy, with as much real sympathy as if I had been the heir to a family squint by my mother's side, or a chalk-stone gout by the father's. The *blackness* was ordered out of the room, though a silver-collared pet

of my young lady's; and the conversation turned on the constitution, character, and domestic virtues of cats in general.

And here I recovered my wits so far, as to join in the discussion with more vivacity than is my wont; for I thought it would be graceful in me, after having given so much unwilling pain, to give a little willing pleasure. Many opposite opinions were held of the domestic virtues of cats in general; and the captain told us, in a very vivacious way, that he had a man in his company, who had an unhappy predilection for brandy, and had declared, that he never could look at a cat with one tail without a painful remembrance of a cat with nine tails. My fair wit, too, had some inclination towards the belief of Pythagoras, and doubted whether cats were not metamorphosed old maids, from the attachment they displayed to those dowager spinsters. Inspired by my aversion to cats, I was bold enough to declare at large my doubts of their virtues altogether, and strongly to insist that they were selfish, hypocritical, cruel, and not to be trusted in breakfast-parlour, or pantry; for that they had always their whiskers in the cream of the one, and their paws in the butter-coolers of the other.

With a voice becoming firm from self-satisfaction, and a countenance brightening up with confidence as I beheld the approving smiles of my auditors, I pronounced a lively anathema against the whole race of the Felinas and the Toms, that was received, in its progress, with many single small laughs, which kept

going off at intervals, like those involuntary or impatient guns which are the precursors of a volunteer volley; and when I had concluded, it was declared, *unâ voce*, to be a lively estimate of the character of cats as they run in these degenerate days; and my previous offences were so thoroughly redeemed, that I saw there was a considerable balance in my favour.

But this good hour was not to last. Adam did not remain long in Paradise, nor I in the momentary blessedness of my parlour Eden. The servant had been despatched below for some purpose or other; and I, being immediately over against mine hostess, was very smilingly requested to succeed him in his very pleasant office of waiting on the ladies! What could have induced the good old lady to confer such a distinction on me, of all men else, seeing what she had seen, I know not; but it was my fate: it was perhaps meant in kindness to me, that I might, by a short course of honourable employment, qualify myself for future honours.—Oh cruel kindness—kind cruelty! I could not refuse (what 'man, of woman born,' could?) the honour of serving a bevy of the prettiest dames in Christendom; I accepted, therefore, with an outward smile of satisfaction, but an inward shrug of chagrin, an office which I could not relinquish, and knew I should disgrace. I left my seat with the fearful plate of toast in my trembling hand; and whether it was the fear of its slipping from my hold, which induced me to pinch it too tightly with my finger and thumb, or whether it was the brittleness of the china, I know not,

but just as I had reached the first fair one of the circle, split went the plate, and splash went its well-buttered contents into the muslin lap of the shrieking lady, leaving me convulsively nipping the fragment of the plate more tightly than ever, and blushing with shame and confusion as I vainly stammered out an apology, interrupted by more *dashes* than you will find in ten chapters of Sterne.—My young lady could not conceal her chagrin at being so much bedaubed: my friend refused to lie for me more—there could be no hereditary antipathy to a plate of toast and butter!—But here my fair wit, who, I verily believe, 'loved me for the dangers I had undergone,' as I love her 'because she did pity them,' saved me from the frowns of the gentle partner in this last dire accident, by wittily remarking, that her fair cousin was never before *toasted* by any gallant. My dear friend who had refused to lie for me, could not, however, refrain from laughing at me, and that most heartily; as for me, I could as soon have laughed at my own death-warrant, as have laughed then. The scattered toast and china were, however, collected from the stained carpet and lap of the young lady, and carried out of the room; and if I had been carried out at the same time, it would have been a great kindness to me, but a greater to the company. To increase the misfortune, too, the tea being poured out into the cups, during the time occupied in preparing the duplicate plate, it necessarily became cold: my friend, too, cruelly rallied me on the subject, till I was almost choked in endeavouring to suppress

my choler. I persisted, however, in sipping my tea, lest I should upbraid him; I could not drink, but gulped it down; and this, if it was observed, was no doubt construed into another breach of good behaviour, deeming, as they must have done, that I drank so greedily as to be in danger of strangling from the haste I used.

A sudden storm is generally succeeded by as sudden a calm; but it was not so with me: the raillery of my friend increased, and threatened quite to overwhelm me. Perhaps he thought by this to cure me of my faults; but he might as well have hoped to cure an irritable wound by scratching it with a gooseberry-bush, patch a splintered leg with sticking-plaster, or bind up a broken heart with cobwebs. My fair friend still was 'true to the defeated side,' and parried off his sharp sarcasms, by entering into a diverting dissertation on the brittle nature of china and friendship, in which she gave him some smart home-thrusts for his unfriendly desertion of his fallen friend, in every word of which I silently and perfectly agreed. In short, so far and so fiercely did my friend push his sarcasm against me, that I had much difficulty to persuade my fair ally that he was indeed my friend, and much more to persuade myself. If I had listened long to her reproaches of him, I should have forgotten Friendship, and listened only to Love, who is, I am already seceder enough from friendship to think, much truer in heart, considerably more eloquent in speech, and amiable in manners. But happily for me, harmony was at length

restored, though 'the *toasted* beauty,' as she was now called, whenever she let fall her eyes on her dress, seemed still to be at war with me in her looks. I felt it, indeed, a thorn in my heart, to be but for a moment an object of disapprobation with a pretty girl of blooming eighteen.

Time waits for no one. My fair friend now left the chair at the sound of a carriage drawing to the door, and the entrance of a smart gentleman, who would have done honour by his appearance to my Lord Duke's rout in 'High Life Below Stairs:' my gentle ally declared she must retire, and gracefully complimenting her fair young friends, curtseying, with much elegance to all the circle, and smiling graciously on me, she prepared to leave the room. At this moment mine hostess, and much louder my heart, whispered me to see my young friend to her carriage: at the thought my head grew giddy, and my heels twisted under me in such a lively manner, that if it was ever possible for a man to turn his back on himself, I think I could have accomplished it then. But I persevered, as cowards often do, and descended the stairs with her soft warm hand gradually freezing as it were in the death-like coldness of mine; for my cowardly blood was I know not where, and I was indeed as cold as the statue of—I saw not who—that stood in the hall.

With shame I now tell the tale: in my extreme hurry to get before the fair creature to the carriage-door, (accursed be all narrow, old-fashioned hall-doors!) my right foot,—(may never hessian-boot,

jockey-boot, walking-shoe, or pump-shoe fit it, without pinching it to the utmost patience of the pain-inflicting, self-torturing martyrs among the olden saints! May the black ox tread on it with his heavy, fearful foot! May it be chilblained in winter; and in summer be like my father's fields—covered with corns! May its best silk stocking, whole in the morning, be full of skin-showing holes ere noon, to its daily disgrace and continual chagrin! May the cotton-stockinged sneer at the undarned holes they observe, as they pass by; the worsted-stockinged splash it to the condition of a scavenger's leg; and Irish chairmen, with their balustrade legs, scrape its calf with their insinuating poles, and kick its ancle with their iron-clouted shoon!)—my right foot—with shame do I confess it—got entangled in her sweeping train of muslin, more delicate and chaste, and finely trailing, than train of the strutting and consequential peacock, which in her is pride and vain showyness, but in woman is grace and modest concealment. I bounded instantly off again, but alas! alas! it was to render my situation the more distressing—my awkwardness the more complete: for with my left foot flew the train, and the sudden jerk curtailed the dress of its 'fair proportions,' and left an accomplished lady as bob-tailed as a Welch dairy wench, or a Dutch frow. My ruin seemed inevitable. She uttered not a word, but her silence spoke volumes to my ears, which tingled with the red blood of shame, as hotly as if they had been boxed for the awkwardness of their Antipodean relatives, my heels. O Fortune,

Fortune! thou art the arrantest trull and baggage that ever followed a foot-cavalier to the field of enterprise! Like a will-o'-the-wisp, that draws the unwary traveller into a ditch, and then disappearing leavest him in his extremity, so didst thou desert me in the moment of need, and leave me the prey of the most inthralling circumstances and soul-shaming sensations!

To finish my catalogue and climax of miseries, I expected that my fair friend would have refused any further assistance of mine; but she bore her loss of train with a philosophy not usually to be found even among female philosophers: she absolutely turned off the accident with a laugh, and said, in her vivacious way, that if I would spare the small train of admirers which dangled after her heart, I was welcome to curtail the train which dangled after her heels. And saying this, she stepped into her carriage, with the grace of the goddess of Beauty into her dove-drawn car, leaving me in mute admiration of her wit and womanhood, and bound to her for her loving-kindness as long as my heart has one fibre that can cling about the image of her person as the weak ivy clings about the limbs of some sylvan sister of the woods, and never looses its hold till that which should support it falls to the earth with it.

Yet though I was pardoned by her, this last vile accident did not pass unnoticed of the groom-porter and the other servants; and I concluded that I should hear of it again, notwithstanding their suppressed sniggers and uncorked giggles, which were nevertheless

oozing out at the compressed corners of their mouths, and were no doubt exploding in all corners of the hall where they could give vent to their laughter with safety to the half-crowns they expected at my departure. With these consoling assurances I returned slowly up stairs; where I had no sooner re-appeared than it was perceived, by my cowering confusion, that I had been once more involved in awkwardness, and a buzz ensued as of a swarm of bees when some unfortunate traveller for the firm of Honey, Wax, and Co. returns back with broken wing and a bankrupt scrip. My very good friend looked a very ingenious set of queries at me, and followed me with his surmising eyes, till I was securely seated behind a wide-branching candelabra, where I dodged him a bit till the breath of his impatience was gone, and that of mine was beginning to chafe itself into an inward storm. After a few minutes had passed away, I mustered courage to say that we must depart. He took the hint, for he saw that I was completely chagrined and discomfited; and with some few of the usual ceremonies, and being pressed to stay, and pressing as heartily to go, and receiving many invitations to come again, we got away without any fresh scrape, save of my shins against the pedestal lamp at the stair-head in sidling through two or three of the party who would see us down; and except my saying, "Good night, Captain," as I shook the old lady, his mother, by the elbow instead of the hand; and "Good evening, Miss," to the beau;—and we then bade adieu to a circle of pleasant, intelligent, kind, and accomplished

beings, whom, though I wish to meet again, I shall never have the courage to venture among.

I retreated hastily, and in some measure, gladly, from the place where I had been involved in so many troubling accidents to myself and others; and as I walked home in moody silence with my companion and co-author of all my misfortunes, I reflected on the necessity of banishing bashfulness from my person, for that certainly was the cause of all my disasters. My heart expanded in freedom when I arrived at my chambers, where I could enjoy my own sovereign way and will in every thing, and have the free use of my hands and other members; and after some time spent in musing on the adventures of the day, and bidding my friend a sullen and cold good night, and blaming him in my thoughts for faults which were mine only, I sat down in the silence of my study, after, in the anger of a minute, stirring up the fire with something like a spiteful thrust of the poker, and committed these memoranda of my misfortunes to paper, in the faint hope that this faithful picture of my awkwardness may serve as a warning to the awkward and inexperienced; and teach them, that bashfulness renders a man a miserable companion, stamps him of vulgar breeding or of imperfect manners, and reflects no small stigma on his character as a creature of sense and a citizen of the world.

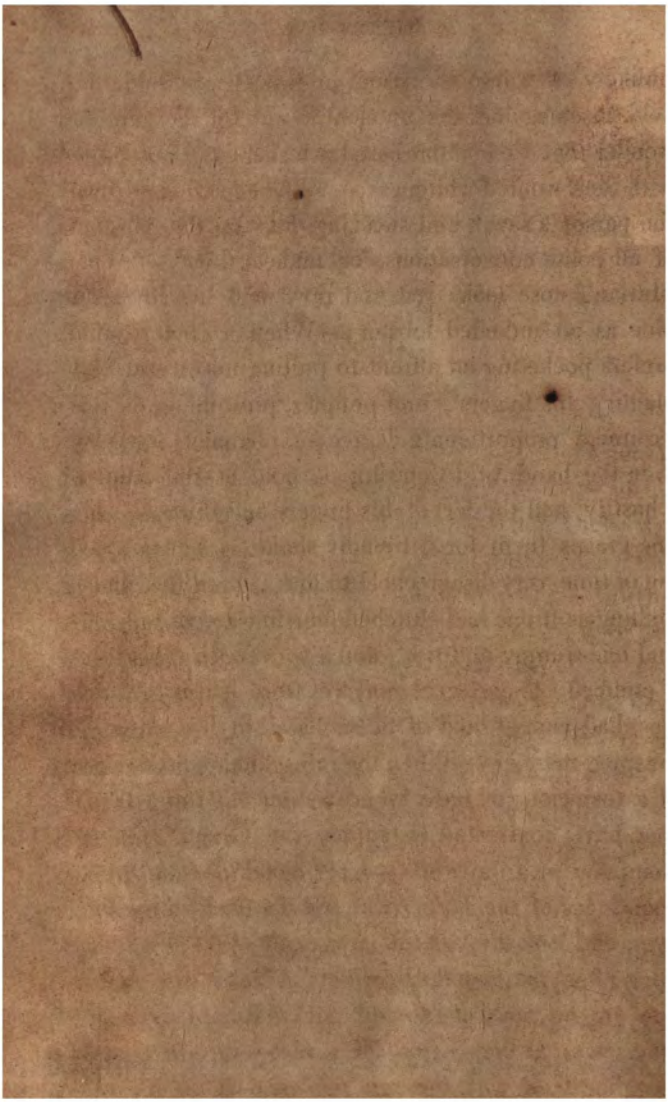
TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES.

No. I.

A WINTER-DAY.

'When icicles hang by the wall,' and Englishmen (according to French writers) hang by the neck in all parks and places of amusement;—'When Dick, the shepherd, blows his nails,' and his name-sake 'the lamp-lighter,' blows that torch in again, which Boreas had mischievously blown out; and some Attic wit, or wit in the attic, (who has been 'riding the whirlwind,' but not 'directing the storm,' or wandering throughout the day with his Philadel, by 'tinkling rills,' through bowers of Arcady, or picking the devilled leg of a bee with the dainty-appetited Titania) descends from the hackney-chariot of his imagination, like a lesser Phaëton, and condescends to blow a very Stonehenge of slates, which he calls a fire, with a pair of asthmatical bellows, whose breath might not disturb 'the thistle-down from where it sometime fell;'—'When milk comes frozen home in pail,' and kittens, who are neither so wise as cats, nor so analyzing as chemists, look green-sickly at the 'white wonder,' and dip their inadequate and

A WINTERS DAY.



unlikely paws into the usual milk pots, and bob their cold noses against the unusual ice at the bottom, and wonder that their unbarbered whiskers are not tipped with their wonted whiteness;—'When coughing drowns the parson's saw,' and sneezing fills up the intervals of all polite conversations, or makes them;—'When Marian's nose looks red and raw,' and her lover's as blue as an unboiled lobster;—When a choleric man prefers pocketing an affront to pulling noses and chilblaining his fingers; and puppies, presuming on this, assume a proportionate degree of pugnacity;—When even the hand of Friendship is cold as the hand of Chastity, and the feel of his fingers and thumbs, when one grasps them for a friendly shake, is, like a shake out of tune, very disagreeable to one's sensations, and as chilling as if one had clutched four full-grown radishes, and one stumpy abortion; and a squeeze in reply, is as if crabbed Cancer, cold and wet from a visit to Aquarius, had caught hold of one's hand in his particular grasping manner;—When the rain-clouds convince you of a suspicion you have for some time entertained, that they have contracted to supply the Grand Junction Company with water at —— per cloudfull; and hypochondriacs of the Tate Wilkinson water, turn up their eyes, and look through the spungy air at the sky, something after the manner in which a drake looks about him ere he waddles abroad, and miserably imagine themselves at the bottom of a vast river, irriguously wriggling their way through mud and mire, like eels in an ecstacy;—When lobby-loungers seem to call a

coach, and the instant they are likely to get one, walk home, on sloppy nights, in pumps whose soles may very properly be termed *suckers;* and some persons, who would blow hot as Tartarus if you did not call them gentlemen, (though their *gentlemanity* is certainly very apocryphal,) while a coach is to be hired on this side heaven, for the salvation of a pair of paltry shillings, suffer delicate women, thinly and beautifully clad (with no other covering from the rain and the wind, than a handkerchief for their heads, a veil, 'thin as the lawn of Cos,' for their shoulders, and kid slippers), to walk westward and eastward, 'through the wind and the rain;'—When hackney-coachmen are most insolent and overcharging; and link-boys are most civil, graciously creating all and every the Smiths and Simpsons who cross their way '*lords*' and '*dukes*,' more especially if they promptly pay into his majesty the sweeper's treasury the usual pennies for their patents, and Mrs. Simpson that may be perks up her head so high at the dignity conferred on her lord elect, Mr. Simpson that is, that at the moment she is dreaming of making what is termed 'a splash in the world,' she makes only an unfortunate plunge in the kennel;—When teeth are very apt to chatter, though they have nothing to talk about; and old ladies of fashion, who are indebted to Ruspini for all the teeth they have, affect a tooth-ache, though they have it not;—When gentlemen who wear wigs under their hats go over bridges of low parapets with cold-shuddering anticipations of 'scudding before the wind under bare *poles;*' and younger gentlemen, who a

moment before wore Dando hats on one side their heads, very often wonder on which side the water the said hats will be picked up, and cannot console themselves that they are warranted water-proof;—When Eurus seems to pique himself on his skill in cutting your cheeks with an *air;* and bullying Boreas 'whistles without,' (perhaps 'for want of thought,') and the parlour solitary within, seated by the fire, doubts awhile whether it is not Timotheus Tomkins, her neighbour's anacreontic footman, whistling through the area-railings to Jeannetta Jenkins, her own maid of '*all work*' and a considerable deal of idleness;—When antique spinsters start at hearing the shutters rattle, and dubitate whether it is the burglarious wind that tries if they are fast, or the anti-burglarious and never-so-careful-as-about-Christmas watchman, and then recollecting the last murder they read of in the pocket 'Newgate Calendar, or Post-Chaise Companion,' with one or two added or improved circumstances of horror which its polite Editor never narrated, dread to sit up and dread to go to bed;—'When the sear and yellow' leaves dance one and all the 'dance of death,' and in select parties waltz to the whistling of Eurus—or swing corners in a country dance to the piping of Auster—or eddy in a whirling reel to the chaunter of 'Dainty Davie' Boreas;—When Dan November cannot grope his way through the blind alleys and dark lanes of our enlightened city, for the fog of his own breath; and Dan December, like Dan Apollo, has a cold partiality for *rime* in the morning;—When tender-hearted old

gentlemen, who are short-sighted, considerately give away their elderly stockings to beggars who wear wooden legs; and my Lapland-hearted friend, the philanthropic Sir Cautious Precipitate, (who is always going about doing good, but never does it,) talks, in his charitable way, of supplying the poor with toothpicks gratis during the winter months;—When the Middlesex coroner's place is least a sinecure, and hypochondriacs, tired of hanging up their hats as usual on the usual pegs, hang up their unusual heads;—'When 'tis night and the mid-watch is come,' and some dog who has neither 'a local habitation,' nor 'a name,' follows the *late* Mr. Jones to his home, and enters there *sans* invitation, and is, *sans ceremonie*, kicked out again quite *extempore*, and partly in spite, partly in chagrin, howls under the windows 'from night till morn;' and Mrs. Patience Perkins, Mr. Jones's fat-fair-and-forty-ish housekeeper, 'overlays *herself*' exactly three minutes and ten seconds beyond her usual matin-hour of six, descends out of humour, and discovers proof-impressions of four feet 'from nature,' and vows every possible vengeance of mops, brooms, and fire-irons upon all dogs who shall in like manner trespass—a high state of exasperation, that vents itself in the collected force of a dishclout hurled at the astonished head of harmless Tray, the butcher's cur, before he hath taken any steps to incur this mitigated penalty, not of the offended law, but the offended Patience Perkins;—When cats, in a select circle, squat on the warm stones over bakers' ovens, holding midnight *conversazziones* somewhat after

the manner of the Italian *recitativo;* and Mr. Singlebed, the bachelor, winks in vain at coquettish Sleep, who stares in astonishment at his old-beauish vanity, that she who hath refused but yesterday to bed with a king, should be expected to condescend to lie with 'sour austerity,'—coy sleep, who will lie with love, but not with Messieurs Gout, Colic, Catarrh, Rheumatism, Asthma, Restlessness, Bad-conscience, Care, or any one of their amiable cousins and cousins-german;—When

The watchman's loud snore breaks the peace that he keeps;
And the lord-(like the night)-*mayor* on a full belly sleeps;—

When hearts which are not wholly selfish, lie awake in their warm beds, and hear the midnight war of the elements, and compassionate those who 'go down to the deep, and do business on the great waters;' and think of the houseless and bedless wretches who rot at rich men's doors, and resolve on some act of charity for the morning;—When even *cherry*-hearted worldlings have intermittent indications of humanity, though they go off with 'the coming light;' and *overseers* (properly so called, for they are generally *overlookers*) of the poor, have one qualm of conscience which deters them till daylight from indulging in the sleepless expectations of the 'Dinner which is to be on table at four to-morrow,' at the expense of four hundred paupers they yesterday refused a shilling to;—When certain unfortunates, who have the organ of *amativeness* very much at their tongue's ends, silently but touchingly convince the

hearts which pity them that they are not quite so happy in clogs and satins at midnight, as they once were in stuffs and pattens at midday;—When these several things come to pass, of life's most genial enjoyments, give me to bask before a sunny fire, in a room too small for little minds, but quite large enough for great ones, with at least two feet in one pair of red morocco slippers, cocked on a fender of a fair altitude, the soles browning with the burning heat, till they are so baked that one is glad to slip one's toes out of them, after thoroughly convincing them that they were neither formed for the old fiery ordeal of footing it over causeways of red-hot iron, nor for competing with Signora Giraldelli, the gulper of molten lead, and other 'hellish broths' which Mrs. Glasse hath left us no recipe for. It is then, I opine, 'daintye pleasaunte,' tossed back in a chair of four legs, tilted to an equilibrium on two, your feet once more on the fender, to loll, motionless and almost conscious of unconsciousness—now dreamily remembering the thoughts and feelings of comfort of younger winter-fireside evenings; and now, with 'lack-lustre eyes,' poring on the brighter coals, which glow like the face of Exercise, pleasing the imagination with those likenesses of things which minds of any heat may discern in the ever-changing aspect of a winter-fire. Pleasant, too, it is to be roused from a reverie, by the accustomed 'Prudence Baldwin, my maid,' who comes in with the candles, and goes out with the coal-scuttle. Pleasant it is to listen to the hum of distant music; or the far roar and stir of the Babel town, wafted, with monoto-

nous repetitions, down the wide, warm chimney, to Meditation's drowsy ear. Pleasant it is to hear the rain patter at the windows, and the winds, who will be 'howling at all hours,' beating and flapping their wings without, yet nothing disturbing the comfort and serenity within. Pleasant it is, about the muffin-time of evening, to be startled from this delicious moment of musing (for Meditation then may 'think down hours to moments, and Learning wiser grow without his books,') by a rap at our door (as well known as some old familiar tune,) that announces the arrival of some treasured friends, who come freighted with the honey of literary toil,

> ——————— like to the merchant bees,
> After a venture far as the Hesperides.

Pleasant, then, are the usual number of 'How d'ye do-s?' and an equal number of 'Never so well-s,' and inquiries after the Smiths and the Joneses. Pleasant are the infinite rubbings of hands, and the warmings within and without the same; and the declarations of the utter impossibility of getting a coach. And after hats, umbrellas, great coats, paraboues, &c. are disposed in order due, pleasant it is to jerk the parlour-bell with that warm and friendly haste which almost jerks it down, and to give command that the 'bubbling and loud-hissing urn' be brought up; and pleasant is the fragrance of the tea, that 'cheers but not inebriates,' steaming up like incense offered to the domestic *lares;* but neither the silent *entrée* of 'Prudence Baldwin, my

maid,' stealing in, like the moon, 'with all her light;' nor call of welcome friends at the muffin-time of evening; nor the uncertain Johnsonian number of cups of the best Twining souchong without sugar, without health, are sweet.

A STORY OF THE OLD TIME IN ITALY.

[*From a Manuscript, found in the Convent of Siderne, in Calabria.*]

"I AM the daughter of noble parents, whom I will not name,—for they should rest undisgraced in their tombs,—who left me sole heir of a large estate in the most fertile fields of Italy. I had fair and stately halls, vassals for service in court or field, ladies for attendance, and every thing needful or unneedful with which human pride can be pampered, and honour or humour desire or deserve. Mistress of these enviable possessions, I had many princely suitors, who met with such honourable entertainment as their many pleasant qualities merited. But there was one never seen among those flattering suitors, who was a thriving wooer with my heart, though he had never worshipped at its shrine; and might have had that woman's toy as a gift which he was either too humble or too proud to ask.

This was the noble gentleman called Guido de Medicis, the owner of a poor estate, touching upon the wider skirts of mine. He was of an ancient race of poets, painters, sculptors, legislators, and members of all the intellect of Italy—that proud land, where the

hand of humble genius is of more nobility than the entire body of merely honourable birth. But he of whom I write is now cold in a grave only vaster than his great capacity, the earth-embracing sea; and could these miserable and shameful tears, which fall at the recollection of the wrong which I have done him, out-water that sea, they would not enough mourn him who is the drowned hope and pride of my dear father-land: vainly, therefore, do I weep a sin which tears may never wash away, nor my life or death atone for to Heaven and my country.

I have said that though poor, he had that nobility which is more noble than rank—independence; but, though seemingly proud, he was really humble: his humility shrank only from the proffered hands and the open palaces of princes, not because he was unworthy of them, but because he would not accept the uncertain honours of the present, when he might enjoy unconditional honours in the future. I bade him to my vanities and sating pleasures; but, with a humbleness which was more gratifying to me than the proudest acknowledgments of more princely men, he would ever refuse, and this with so winning a grace, that I was happier to be refused of him than accepted of the highest of Italy. His severe studies, and his patriotic endeavours for the welfare of his country, were the first wishes of his noble nature: these were excuses which I, who desired his future glory, could not be adder-deaf unto; and I was, therefore, more pleased at his absence from the vain parade of pride and the

worthless revel of pleasure, than at his presence, if it must have been bought with precious hours, which are few and numbered here, that we may use them only as purchasers of immortality hereafter. But, though absent from my court, he was ever present to my mind, where, whichevever way I looked, in hall or bower, at the banquet or in the dance, whatever I saw that was noble or graceful, seemed only like so many faint resemblances and dim recognitions of him.

This admiration could not long exist without other pulses stirring in my heart. Jealousy, and doubt, and fears of what might happen as impediments between me and him racked me with painful anticipations. It was necessary to my happiness that I should draw him nearer, and ensure him mine; but how was this to be brought about with no loss of modesty, and that self-respect which even virtue, in her purest intentions, may not leave to the mercy of calumny, and the accidents of chance? I could not, from a maidenly shame, confess that I loved him: I deemed that the difference between our fortunes alone separated us; and resolved, if it might be done, to remove his poverty; and went about it with that delicacy which only a heart that loves can devise. He was already eminent throughout Italy for his sculpture: to engage him to adorn my palace with the creations of his chisel would place him more frequently before my eyes, and, by enriching him, make his fortune more equal to my own. I resolved, therefore, to place a large sum in his hands, to purchase such works as his genius had

already created to be immortal, and all that it might for some time create. Sending a careful messenger before, announcing that I would visit his gallery, I sat out with a small retinue of noble friends to his little villa. He met me at the door; and, with the grace of genius, surrendered the heirs of his fame to my wish with as much modest indifference to their value, as if they had been but the toys of an idle taste. But for the gold and jewels which I had sent him, rather as presents than a consideration for his productions, which no price could purchase, he would have none of them: his fortune, he insisted, was enough for all his wants; and it was more than enough for him if his poor works were thought worthy of the honour I intended them. Still I pressed these presents on him, and still he refused; when, finding that he would not by my hands be lifted level with myself in riches, I resolved at least to make myself as poor as him; and determined on founding a school for the arts in Florence, and on endowing it with more than the sum he had so resolutely yet modestly refused. I made my intention public, and invited the artists of Italy to the work, not doubting, meanwhile, that this poor munificence would find favour in his eyes. He praised my devotion to the true glory of his country, and for a time I was hopeful of success. But this pleasant dream was too soon dissipated, and, like a vapour before the sun, it vanished.

From some inquiries which I had made among his domestics, I learnt that his heart (which I had thought

possible to be mine) was irrecoverably given to the fair Bianca, daughter of Baptista Buonaventi, an old merchant of Florence; and that, in a few days, he was to set out for Syracuse to claim her hand, in fulfilment of a solemn compact, made when passing his novitiate in that city. This intelligence came like death upon my heart; and, for many days, I held myself averse from the gay company and the old courtesies of my house. My noble friends saw my spirit to be sick, and strove to come at its disease; but I had already formed my resolution, rather than confess my weakness, to die of an undiscovered grief, and, since my malady was hopeless, that it should be also voiceless. I preserved that strict silence which is alone the security of secrecy. But, nevertheless, I wept my sorrows in the loneliness and darkness of the sleepless night; and this I did, till the paleness of my cheek was now so constant, instead of its wonted ruddiness, that it was scarcely noticed, either by the pitying kindly, or the prying curious. The flatterer, the whisperer, and the surmiser, left me thenceforth to myself; and my palace, which had been the open hall of revel and riot, was now serious as the house of death. A moody quiet, and the silent abstractedness of a pining passion informed the silence, with a voice audible as the song of pleasure, or the hum of revelry, that joy had winged from those walls.

This violent change in the vivacity of my living did not escape the notice of Guido; but still his heart, which was too much occupied with his promised hap-

piness, seemed no way conscious of the reason for this gloomy change. He inquired, with the kindness natural to him, of those he could not be informed by, why it was; and deeming it to be some mood of the mind, arising from the satiety of fortune, or from the pain of too much pleasure, he left the secret of my malady to those who might torture it by their probing, but could not cure it by any skill which they possessed.

The day and the hour was now arrived, when he was to set out on his way to old Baptista's; and as he passed under the lattice of my chamber, with a brave retinue of horsemen, chiefly his friends and kinsmen, with some few followers of his house, I could not, though my eyes were dim with tears at the sight, refrain from witnessing his departure—although I felt that with him went all that was dear to me in love, and pleasant in life. As his horse curvetted restively under my window Guido looked up, and reining in the impatient steed, he lifted his cap from his head, and let loose to the winds his curled redundance of raven-shining hair: then gracefully bending in his saddle, and kissing his hand to me, he passed on, followed by the blessings of the poor, to whom he was ever charitable, and by the admiration of the wealthy, who saw in him the hope and example of his country. I watched his retiring as a Persian follows the sun's, till I could no longer descry any thing in the distance but the circling horizon; and throwing myself on a couch, vainly endeavoured to turn the tempest of passion to patient prayers for his happiness.

Thus, by nourishing resignation to the will of Heaven, my soul gradually softened into composure, though sadness would often force her due of tears; and the blessed Mother heard my prayers, and comforted me: and rest for awhile came back to my bed; but it was not long that it abode there. Religion could not long render me patient under suffering, nor administer comfort where there was no hope. Again I summoned the votaries of pleasure to my halls; but their hollow vanities were now hateful, and the happiness they pretended to bestow made me the more conscious of that which I had lost. Weary of all that was once pleasant to me, I resolved in an evil hour to follow de Medicis—preferring rather to see the happiness of one who had rendered me most wretched, than not again to behold him. Summoning my chamberlain, I informed him that sudden business demanded my presence in Florence; but that my departure must be secret, and my absence equally so.

Ere the early lark had rustled wakefully in his nest I was in the saddle; and, followed by a trusty servant, hurried my way to the bright city, where I soon discovered the house of old Baptista, and going up to it, I was seen by the gentle Guido, who, coming out to meet me, hospitably welcomed me. I feigned that the business of my foundation for the arts had brought me thither, so that my intent was unsuspected, and I was once more in sight of him who had robbed me of happiness never more to be restored.

Bianca Buonaventi was indeed a woman worthy of

a sculptor's love; for all those beauties which Art has imitated from Nature were mingled in her. In her form were blended all that I had till then thought the idealities of Grecian grace and Roman majesty: in motion, she was stately as the swan; and swam the air, rather than walked the earth. Her step was an inaudible music; her voice sweeter than the recollected music of a dream. Her mind was a book of pure and wise thoughts, written surely by some hand divine. Her countenance such as angels wear—and they were made fair that man might love Heaven, where all is beautiful. Love shone in her eyes, but with so holy and placid a fire,—two sister stars burning in the winter heaven beam not a chaster light: wherever they turned, all eyes were illuminated, and whatever she looked upon reflected back the beauty she turned upon it. Indeed, in all those fair and admirable qualities which make woman worthy of that paragon of earthly creatures—man,—she was perfection. That Guido should love the gentle girl was no longer wonderful; for I even loved him the more that he did love her, so endearing a power hath beauty in its purity.

As every hour developed her exceeding worth, and disclosed to me some new loveliness which I had not before discerned, the selfishness which would have made me the serpent to destroy the happiness of this second Eden, became poisonless and innocent—pride melted to pity, and pity to love; and I then religiously resolved to turn the bitterness of my passion into a

sister's love for her. This resolution gave a happiness to my heart which was new to it, and for a while I kept true to this holy purpose.

On the morrow following, they were to be married, —womanliness to manliness—beauty to love—grace to genius. That morrow came—I attended the solemn rite—saw two hearts made earthly one and indivisible, and heavenly happy; and though my human heart shed some natural tears, I wrestled with the dying strugglings of passion with more than woman's fortitude. Never was Florence, that gay city, happier than on that day; for never did so many hearts breathe their benedictions on two happy beings, or more fervently invoke heaven for the welfare of the pride of Italy and the flower of Florence.

Guido, in this happy hour, seemed as if rapt in a poet's ecstasy, and trod the earth as lightly as an alighting angel, still up-buoyed by his open though motionless wings. He seemed indeed too ethereal for an earthly being: whilst she, shrinking with a maidenly diffidence from the admiring glances of the crowd, gave only now and then a look of fondness and pride at the lord of her choice; and so trod her gentle way from the church, followed by the silent blessings of her friends, and the loud benedictions of old and young—of Florentine and foreigner. The gay procession then took horse, and, passing out of the city, journeyed on through the country, till it came to Campanelle, on the silvery shore of the Mediterranean, where lay anchored a goodly vessel, which

was to waft the lovers, with some few friends, over sea to Syracuse. There, at a villa, pleasant for a fair prospect, and rich for its productiveness, lying as it did among purple vineyards on a hill, at whose foot ran the clear blue sea,—they were to wile away the summer hours of love.

Going safely on board the goodly ship, we bent sail before an easy breeze from the shore, and stood out for the strait of Messina, through which we had to pass ere the lovers could reach the happy nuptial haven.

It was evening ere we had cleared the pleasant shore of Tuscany, and the sun as it set seemed flushed with a troubled red which threatened a storm; but as a storm in that sea is seldom fatal, the helmsman was commanded to stand still farther out, and so get room to run before it, if it came on as severely as was dreaded. Being put about, the gay bark danced over the waves trimly and gallantly. And so for some time she sped; but suddenly the wind, from breathing regularly and gently as a sleeping child, held its breath like a heart in terror, as if nature had suffered some sudden pause in its continual activity: and the ship, who was cutting her rapid way through the surfy waves, with all her sails full to straining, dropped, as it were, out of the hands of the wind, and fell heavily, and almost without motion, into the lap of the sea, the white sails flapping feebly and emptily in the recoiling air. A faint cry of surprise from the crew told too plainly that all was not well. Old Baptista and the master-mariner looked troublously at each

other, and, blessing the vessel from harm, gave their orders secretly to the men. The clouds which had followed the sun in his descent looked fiery-red; whilst others, that seemed fixed by their own density, poured a darkness blacker than night upon our path. For an hour the breathless ship lay becalmed; but at last the wind stirred again, but weakly and fitfully, and howled among the cordage its shrill notes,—a preluding strain, prophesying too fatally the terrors of the tempest which was fast coming on: the sails flapped a moment, and then dropped loosely down, and babbled idly with the dying breeze.

The night was now dark to blindness, and there was no friendly light either of moon or star. The red clouds, that till then had caught the day's last-lingering ray, gradually grew black as the pall of death; and the wide horizon dark as the dome where Death holds his court. But soon the rapid lightning began to cut through the clouds, and made the darkness more dark, when it had flickered past, from its momentary excess of light. And now, in the distance, might be heard the surly threatening of the thunder. The wind began to blow gustily; the lightning flashed wider and more vividly; and once the ship seemed to tremble through its very frame under a thunder-burst, that sounded, to our startled ears, as if it had exploded against the cap of her creaking mast of pine. The lovers, who till then had heeded only each other, for a moment looked aghast, and muttered their prayers to St. Lucy, the virgin martyr of Syracuse, to waft

them safely thither. The master was pale, as if he saw what must happen, before it had approached; the mariners crossed themselves, and committed their souls to the care of the holy saints. Again the lightning washed over the deck, as it were a whiter and more silvery water than earth contains, flowing down in a flood from heaven; and no eye could bear to look on it longer than a moment. The helmsman dropped the wheel from his hands, that he might cover his face with them; the mariners turned away their faces from the blinding flashes, and the lovers hid their's in each other's bosom. The thunder now seemed to shake even the very heavens under which it rolled; the riotous sea, as though awed by its tremendous power, hushed its appalling roar, and for a moment lay still and level as a lake between two wind-outshutting hills. In the next, it rolled with terrible rushes along its way, apparently without the compulsive power of the winds. But soon they came—feebly at first, but gathering a savage strength as they advanced.

The frail vessel, which had lain on the waters like a log, strained under their strong stirring, and creaked as if its ribs were severing. High wave followed high wave, as if they were indeed not waves, but mountains sliding off the face of the earth into the sea of space—when, rolling some way over the common level of the waters, they fell with a crushing noise into the bed of the sea. At length all the fury of the tempest seemed gathered; and again the lightning glanced along the deck and mingled with the washing

waves, so that it was not easy to say whether the water was not lightning, or the lightning water, for they appeared one. The crazy vessel now dipped down, and now heaved to this side, and now to the other, like a toy in the hands of the mighty tempest. The master gave command, seeing that the sea broke with every rush over the ship, that those who feared the peril should go below; but not one of all the trembling throng stirred from where they held by the ship, —for all saw the worst, and none thought it possible to escape from it. Bianca clung in silent horror to her husband, who strove to comfort her, and bid her take heart. The old man covered his grey head with the foldings of his cloak; and, as he sat motionless and wordless, seemed the very resignation of despair. The crew were alternately on their knees, or starting up fresh-couraged to do the best they could for the groaning ship; but all availed not. The hand of man could not guide her through such a sea; and the master would have quitted the helm, had it not been something to hold by, as the waves swept fiercely over the deck, carrying away whatever thing, animate or inanimate, was loose or infirm. The rudder having been some time powerless, it was not easy to know whither the vessel had driven. She had drifted before the wind; but the master knew not whether we were off the shore of Sicily or of Calabria: it was certain that we were not far from land; for, in the pauses of the bellowing wind, we might sometimes hear the sound of a convent-bell, rung by the good religious of that

97943

pious sanctuary, to warn the darkling mariner of his nearness to the rocks off the land. But when the wind got up again, it blew the guiding sound back upon the shore, and left us without hope or help. Whilst we were despairing of the worst, it came; for, on the sudden, the reeling ship struck violently on a reef of rocks, and a loud cry from the crew, succeeded by a louder shriek from the women, proclaimed with horrid voice, that all was lost.

The shock of her striking was so powerful, that the fearful, who were clinging together to help one another, were torn from each other's grasp as by a stronger grasp, and thrown separately to different parts of the deck; and the storm at that moment gave a hideous howl, as if it triumphed in its strength. The gallant Guido, though flung from his seat upon his face, fell with the fainting Bianca in his arms; but getting instantly on his feet again, shouted with a resolute voice, that put courage even into the hearts of the despairing mariners, "Fear nothing! God is the guide of the good! He will save us yet!" And the master at that moment shouted too, but fearfully and shrilly, as if he shrieked, "She is off again, unharmed! Fear not, fear not! our heavenly mother Mary, and the good saints, are about us!" Then all on board crossed themselves on brow and breast, and muttered inwardly their prayers to Heaven. It was true that she had endured but little hurt, and, with the recoiling rush of the waves, was thrown afloat again; but ere the master could leap to the helm, to put her farther out, a strong sea came

driving before the wind, which now blew as it would part the poles, and again flung her, as if she were no mightier than a sea-shell, upon the sharp rocks. She broke at the blow like parted bread, the stern-half of her huge bulk tumbling over into the sea, while the head of the vessel lay reeling on the rock. Then the shriek of dismay and death went up from men that were never more to call on Heaven; for the many of the crew were crowded about the helm, and, when it parted, went down with her, never again to rise with life. The venerable Baptista, Guido, his fair wife, and my wretched self, still clung to the chains at the bow; but not long held we there, for a strong wave came mounting at our backs, and in a moment we were hurled with the halved vessel down from the reef into the gaping abyssmal depth it had left in the sea. Again the fragment mounted to the surface-sea, and we had all held to each other and to the ropes which were coiled round our bodies, save the feeble Bianca, who had sunk out of the grasp of her husband, but, being entangled in the coil of the ropes, was not swept into the sea. We might hear another wave coming with a rushing roar towards us, as it had determined we should be its prey; when Guido, seeing, with the calmness of courage, that, if we awaited it, our escape was hopeless, cried out, "Father, take thou the care of the Lady Erminia, as I will of thy daughter, and let us at once leap beyond the reef into the sea, and struggle for the land."

And now shrink not as from the serpent-fiend, to

hear me tell the story of that crime which has cursed me here, and may hereafter. After these words, he again cried out, "Bianca, my beloved, where art thou?" The fatal love which had fed upon me like a flame upon a living sacrifice, even in this awful hour burnt sensibly in my hateful heart; and, prompted by that miserable passion, and the love of him and of life, some fiend answered surely with my tongue, "Here!"—and he caught at me as a desperate drowner doth at a floating weed, and leaping into the sea, cried to the old man, "Follow me, father, follow me!" But he heard him not; for I saw that he was dead, and had fallen on his swooned child, who, as we leaped into the sea, shrieked out, and audibly informed me that she still lived, though my struggling soul would fain have quieted its conscience with the thought that she was dead, and so have palliated to itself, if it failed afterwards to Guido and to Heaven, its damnable deceit. Guido heard not her cry, or if he did, took it, in the stunning turbulence of the tempest's roar, for mine. For a long time he buffeted the waves with a giant's strength, and a courage that could not be weakened; and still as he beat the waves aside, or breasted them like a living rock, he cried, "Be of good cheer, my Bianca, I shall save thee yet!" And when I heard him call on her name, my heart smote so fearfully within me, that, though I was sure of death if I had disclosed that I was Erminia, I thrice had nearly confessed the dreadful truth; but my love of life, and cruel love of him, stifled my voice. Twice I saw, in the glaring flash of the lightning, that

he gazed upon me, to see if I had life; for the fear of disclosure, and the peril of the waters, made me voiceless and strengthless, and I lay almost lifeless in his clasping arm, as he struck through the waves with the other. He looked on me again, but the waters had washed my long hair over my face, so that he knew me not; and still he clasped me to him tenderly, and beat his burdened way through the sea. Long time thus he contended resolutely with death, when, just as his strength was spent, and he had bade me commit my soul to Heaven, he descried lights not far before us, and faintly told me still to hope, for we were near land. This nerved him anew, and he plied his way lustily, till at length we touched the rocky shore, where, summoning a desperate man's might, he clambered up the low craggy cliffs, and feeling the firm earth under him, dropped to the ground, from utter exhaustion. For some time I knew not what occurred, for safety then seemed more dreadful to me than the dangers I had passed through, and I swooned. When I recovered, I found Guido endeavouring to bring life back, by cherishing me in his bosom. And ever and anon he would call for help, as strongly as he might, to the distant fishermen's cottages, where he had first discerned the light which led him to the shore.

At length we descried a light approaching the spot where we lay, still on the ground, and could hear the loud halloo of the comers; and after some time, guided by his continual cry, a fisherman came up with a torch. As it neared us, I shrank from it like a foul and guilty

thing that loves darkness rather than day, but in vain; for Guido's anxious eye looked at last on my face as the light fell on it, when, uttering a dreadful shriek of dismay and despair, he dropped me from his arms, and, starting from the ground like one made instantly mad by some sudden stroke upon the brain, he rushed, staggering and strengthless, but wildly, to the cliff. I clung to him heavily, to prevent him from again leaping into the sea: but I dared not speak to him, save by feeble, inarticulate cries. He glanced at me a look which withered me, and shaking me like a serpent to the earth, with a terrible cry, flung himself from the cliff into the sea. I beheld him beating his way back to the wreck, as the lightning momentarily flashed from the firmament; and, at length, I saw him grasp at some white burden on the waters, and again turn for the shore: but suddenly his right arm ceased to strike out; and though I kept my breaking eyes fixed on the same spot, when the next lightning flashed I saw that he had sunk; when, crying to God in my despair, I fell on my face, and was insensible to all about me.

* * * * *

Within these peaceful and holy walls years have since passed over me. But the thought of that dreadful hour, and of the still more dreadful guilt which it brought upon my soul, is ever present to my mind. The images of Guido and his murdered bride rise between me and all rest,—even between me and devotion. My wealth has been given to the pious uses of

this convent, and my penance and prayers are proportioned to my great guilt. But the calming and restoring influence even of religion cannot wholly lull the troubled agony of a memory like mine. Still, in the trust of God and the holy saints, I look with joyful hope to the term of all human suffering.—Oh! if the intensity of earthly agony can extenuate and atone for earthly guilt—then even I may dare to look with confidence towards Heaven!"

ON WHAT THE LADIES CALL 'NICE MEN.'

THERE are several kinds of *nice* men; but I shall content my readers with two of them:—

1. *The Man of Nice Tastes.*—He is partly of beau Brummel, partly of base Brummagem manufacture. He is your hypercritic in literature, painting, sculpture, music, acting, dancing, and singing; and is, moreover, profound in the *virtù* of coats, snuff-boxes, and kept-Chloes. A creature of this class is as troublesome to you with his opinions, as an old over-provident housekeeper, of the Mrs. Alison frugality, or a conscientious steward—(but these are very scarce troubles.)

All niceness is effeminacy: niceness of judgment is but mental effeminacy. Strong minds are sometimes diseased down to it; but there are some men that seem born with this sickliness: one can conceive that they had a severe taste in pap, when infants; and when boys, were supreme-judgmented in taws and peg-tops. The man is as much to be pitied who has this malady of the mind, as if he had any one lingering disorder of the whole catalogue of sufferings which 'flesh is heir to.' A nice woman is put-up-with-able;—I knew one

who was so over-exquisite, she would not be cantered in a swing set up in a kitchen-garden, because, as she whispered, the potatoes had *eyes;* but a nice man is a nausea: it is, as a certain Irish orator would say, the lion *aping* the lap-dog; the oak the violet.

You may know this class very easily. There is observable, in that very expressive feature, the nose, a prominent indication of never-failing conceitedness of opinion, and a nice dissatisfaction with everything but themselves, in the up-curling of its widely-dilated nostrils: the nose I mean is very like the poet Gray's. You would think, at the first look, that it was merely hypercritical in snuffs,—profound in distinguishing adulterated Irish Blackguard from the real; but, upon a nearer acquaintance, you discover that its discernment is of a higher and nicer character. This nose may vary in its shape: it may have the straightness of the Grecian; the eagle-beaked curve of the Roman; the strength and manly look of the English; the shortness and pertinacity of the Scotch; or the snubbiness and obstinate stupidity of the Irish nose: the *contour* may vary, but the sentiment, the expression of the nose, is ever the same.

A critic of this class will not suffer you to admire any one thing for yourself: it is his pleasure (which, consequently, is your pain) to point out two things you should admire, which are not worthy to be admired, and two hundred you should not, which are. If Venus herself could bud out of her imaginary existence into the full-blown beauty of a thing of life, and come

among the inhabitants of this 'terraqueous earth,' our nice man would find out that she halted in her gait; or that she squinted; or that her teeth were not so white as Ruspini's; or that her waist required stays *à la Diane*, to give it a graceful, undulating bend; or that her yellow tresses had too much of the sandy hue in them, and perhaps call her a 'red-haired wench.' If you have a new coat you must consult his taste, and not your own; or endure the penalty of being held by the third button (that is his favourite one, because three is the number of the Graces,) while he lectures on the cut and constitution of coats, from the remotest collar of antiquity to the most recent cape of modern days—from the little coat of Samuel, to the great coat of Stultz. You sprain your ancle in a slip from the pavement, and he falls to shewing you how you might have sprained it with more grace in a Psychean quadrille. You weep the loss of some dear friend before him, and he asks you whether you have ever seen the celebrated statue of the weeping Narcissus, or that of the tearful Niobe; he thinks their attitudes have more of the grace and sentiment of sorrow in them than your's. This is impertinent and unfeeling enough; but I verily believe that if his brother were about to endure what is technically termed the 'Tyburn-tie,' he would object to the taste of the county-valet, and would, perhaps, step up on the scaffold to change the knot to the 'tie *à la Cavendish*.'

He is a critic in every thing, from a pin to a pyramid; from an epic to an epigram. He looks at Mem-

non's head (in the Museum) with a microscopic eye, and discovers that the granite is not without flaws. It is not easy to please him who cannot please himself. I should as soon hope to gratify a greyhound, by ordering him to be horse-shoed. Did Apollo himself indulge his ear with a *capriccio*, he would play too flat or too sharp. It is no wonder, then, that Shakspeare shocks him; and that 'his dramatic style is a bad one;' or that 'Ben Jonson's works, taken altogether, are but trash.' (Pope.) Milton he agrees with Waller in considering as nothing more than 'an old blind schoolmaster, who wrote a poem,' something about the loss of Paradise, or his pug-puppy, he forgets which, who, 'if dulness and length are the principal requisites for a grand work,' certainly was a great author. You shew him a painting of Hope you have just finished; he asks you to let him look at Despair, and gives you to understand, by a certain smirk of conceit writhing in the corners of his mouth, which he would prefer if he had to marry either of them by the choice of her portrait. You shew him a sketch you have made of the Furies dragging Eurydice back to the infernal regions; and he asks you why you did not persuade the Furies to put their snakes in papers, "for you see they are horribly out of curl." You shew him your own portrait; he glances hastily at it, and says, "You have flattered the old gentleman too much," meaning your father. You assure him that it was intended for yourself, and he lifts up his brows with surprise, and assures you, in return, that it is not a bit like you; besides, "Who would

know it to be the portrait of a painter? Let it have some mark and likelihood in it. Why not throw in a touch or two in St. Luke's style—a bull's head and a pallet?" You paint another; and to pourtray your profession as well as yourself, you introduce the portrait of a favourite ass. You call him in; and at the first glance he cries, "Why, what is this? Ho!—I see: the *same* head in two positions?" Then you quarrel with him for his ill-nature; and then he begs your pardon for his severity, and confesses that he is a little out of temper, because he had pricked his fingers with 'Gammar Gurton's Needle,' in buying a Whitechapel* one; and then, to restore you to smiling, he says, "Tut, man, never be fretted by a sneer! Sneers are to a fine-spirited genius, what spurs are to a high-mettled horse—they prick him on. Why, there was what's-his-name, the great fine-art-ist, sneered at me but yesterday, with his iceberg-like looking nose, (not that I consider myself a genius—Apollo forbid!) and why, guess you? simply because I insisted that the toe-nail of the piping Faun was a more perfect semicircle than the eyelid of John of Bologna's couching Venus!"

You confide your new comedy to his hands; he looks at the cover, and admires its Grecian border, reads thrqugh the title down to '1827,' returns it, calls it a farce run to seed, advises you to study divinity, and sends you a pastoral discourse by old Toplady. You introduce your wife's shock-dog to him, and he shocks

* A cant phrase for a counterfeit copy of this old play.

her by declaring that he sees nothing in him but an animated hearth-rug.

He is proud of being considered a man of taste, though he sometimes allows that taste is a great maker of little minds. A friend of his says of him, that, like the Lord Mayor's *taster*, he makes a meal of no one dish, and is hungry with plenty before him. He is, however, a very *gourmand* in pic-nics; and it is not a few dainties will satisfy his appetite. He picks a leg of the young Antinous; a bit of the breast of Canova's Venus; a lip of the Piping Faun; a knuckle of the Gladiator; the wing of an angel from the Cartoons; and the pope's eye from Lawrence's Pontiff;—these tit-bits serve for his morning repast. His more substantial, or dinner meal, consists of an *olla podrida* of Lamb's *tales*, Crabbe's *tales*, and Hogg's *tales*,—a strangely-selected literary dish, all of which he tastes of, with a hungry ostrich sort of haste, grumbling as he picks them to pieces, like a gourmand who is fuller of spleen than satisfaction, when his soles are done to devils. Two dozen of Milton objections, instead of one of ditto oysters, serve as a side dish. A mouthful of Bacon, swallowed, with some complaints of there being too much of the Attic salt in it, and an insinuation that it has grown rusty from antiquity, and is not likely to be relished by high tastes, finishes the meal.

His opinions are not worth much; but I was glad to hear him say, that "Any lord who wrote poetry, and could be priggish enough to assert that Cowper was no

poet, would be intemperate enough to take the next chair's wig off to wipe his own mouth withal."

2. *The Nice, or Ladies' Man.*—This is a sort of Tom Shuffleton grown flat, staid, and fortyish—a fop running to seed; just such a being as would have made Cowper's 'wheel-footed chair, wide-elbowed and wadded with hair,' (for which he thanked Lady Hesketh so pleasantly) a thorn-stool. The poet of Olney says of such an one—

> 'I cannot talk with civet in the room,
> A fine puss-gentleman that 's all perfume;
> The sight 's enough—no need to smell a beau!
> Who thrusts his head into a raree-show?
> His odoriferous attempts to please,
> Perhaps, might prosper with a swarm of bees;
> But we that make no honey, though we sting,
> Poets, are sometimes apt to maul the thing.'

The ingredients which go to his composition are,—a good face, white teeth, and regular (or, as a waggish friend of mine describes them, teeth which keep good hours); a nose that has neither sneers nor snuff about it, though he politely puts himself to the expense of maintaining a box for noses that carry their own sneers, but take anybody's snuff; a very moderate share of sense, and an immoderate share of nonsense, mixed according to the Gratiano recipe (that is, in the proportion of two grains of wheat to two bushels of chaff); a voice that sounds agreeably musical in a 'How-d'ye-do?' in the ante-room, in a quartett or conversation in any room, or in a 'Good night' at the extremity of the

hall-stairs; a back which can bend like a willow to a Lord George, or a Lady Fanny; a smile and insinuated sovereign, which purchase my lord's butler, and procure him hot plates, choice bits, and frequent changes of both—besides careful helpings-on of great coats, infinite care-taking of hats, umbrellas, and walking-sticks, and gentle shuttings of hall and hackney-coach doors after him; a smirk that does not displease my lady's confidential maid, when it is accompanied by something more substantial; hands white, long-fingered, and acorn-nailed, if convenient; legs with some probability of calf; ancles as much superior to the Apollo Belvidere as possible; two eyes of one colour; whiskers and hair of his own growth; washes, essences, lavender soaps, toothpicks and powders, tight waist, tighter pantaloons, silk stockings, &c. &c.

He is of an equable temper, lightly pleased, and not lightly displeased. He is as cheerful to-day as he was yesterday; his boots and his wit were equally brilliant yesterday and to-day. I have, however, known him melancholy; but that was when his '*dear* Chloe' was unkind, and would not confess (what he had some violent suspicions about) whether the crop of shavings he found on her toilette were the produce of that pretty piece of common-land, *her* chin. And then he talked of committing suicide, by throwing himself into the arms of Dowager-Countess Closefist, with ninety thousand attractions a-year; and then Chloe frowned him out of her presence; and then he came like a prodigal in penitence back again; and then Chloe forgave him,

over-persuaded by a set of brilliants, valued at two hundred guineas by Love; and then he was made so happy and tractable, that she sent him out of her house on the stilts of elevation just five minutes, by the gold repeater he had lately given her, before his rival, the Marquis, descended from his close carriage to fly to her arms and her drawing-room.

He has not any opinions, he has so many: but what he has are always your's. He agrees generally with the last speaker.

> 'He would not with a peremptory tone
> Assert the nose upon his face his own;
> With hesitation, admirably slow,
> He humbly hopes, presumes it may be so.'

He

> 'Knows what he knows, as if he knew it not;
> What he remembers seems to have forgot;
> His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,
> Centering at last in having none at all.'

Being independent as to property, he may be considered a kind of amateur toad-eater,—a toad-eater, without the venom of one of those reptiles. If his lordship is disposed to be profoundly axiomatical, and says, that mock-turtle is not real turtle, he does not dispute it, but swallows my lord's mock-turtle and his real opinion at the same time. My lady asserts that Chaucer did not write Comus, and he confesses that the strength of her ladyship's assertion has staggered an opinion he had held to the contrary. If his lordship is merely witty, he always laughs in time and in tune. His laugh is loud, long, and peculiar; his acquaintance

is therefore much cultivated by 'wits among lords,' and 'lords among wits:' it is something like a chromatic run down the keys of the piano; whether it is to shew the soundness of his teeth, of exceeding whiteness and regularity, or the compass of his voice, or to convince you how wide he could yawn, and thus increase the value of his attention, by betraying how awful and grave-gaping his inattention would be, is perhaps known to himself. It is thought to be very cordial; so it is: there is but one thing I prefer to it—and that is an instrument which is now making, under exclusive patronage, by which laughing is imitated in all its wide varieties, from the laugh obligato or forced, and the laugh reluctant or equivocatory, to the laugh delightful or satisfactory, and the laugh extempore or voluntary: I prefer this, because here I do not despise the man in the instrument.

His other uses are,—to hand young ladies to carriages, and say nothing of their ancles, if they are not to his taste, and as much as he pleases if they are, so that it be not in their mammas' hearing; but it may be as much as possible in the hearing of any rival beauty who cannot boast of the 'Milanie foot of fire.' He may too, if there is an opportunity, insinuate that the foot of the blue-stocking Lady Sapphira Sapphic, is like a foot of the heroic measure (meaning a Life-guardsman's): this will not displease them, for they utterly abhor Lady Sapphira, because, at her last rout, her footmen squeezed into her room a thin young gentleman, and thereby had a majority of one over the

number crammed in at the rout of the Countess their mother the preceding evening. To hand old ladies to their sedans on court-days, and be as patient as Penelope in compressing them and their hoops into them. To quadrille with young ones, if a younger lord has not come to his time. To sit seriously and at ease with battered beauties and decayed dowagers, in winter-evenings, and look as if he had never been happier; and, if possible, remember the best days of the dowagers, and forget when the Honourable Miss Tittermouth combed her own hair, and giggled among her own teeth. To wait on lovely countesses at Almack's, between the dances; and serve lemonades, ices, and jellies with a page's precision, and a prince's politeness of back and body. To say handsome things to the ordinary Miss Honourables, and look unutterably handsome things at the beautiful ones. To shop with them at the jeweller's, once in a way; and admire their taste when they prefer French *fillagree* to English reality and sterlingness. At the opera, to cry 'bravo' for weak-voiced elderly lords, when Fanny Ayton sings; and clap no louder than the same when fairy-footed Brocard dances. These are his principal amusements, and altogether they make up a very harmless sort of *nice* being, to which one can no more object than to honey and bread for breakfast, honey and biscuit for luncheon, honey and French roll for dinner, honey and ladies'-fingers for tea, and honey and gingerbread for supper.

TWO EYES BETWEEN TWO.

TWO EYES BETWEEN TWO;

A TALE OF BAGDAD.

Yusef Zanballat, a tailor of Bagdad, was reputed throughout that city for the excellent cloth and cut of his habits, and was equally reputed for the *trust* which he put in his customers,—young gentlemen of the spendthrift class, of large expectations and little ready money, who waited with becoming resignation for the several days on which their considerate fathers were to depart this life for a better—an exchange which old gentlemen are remarked to be extremely dilatory in effecting, putting it off to the last moment, and licking up the lees of life's wine with as savoury a smack as if it were the wine itself!

Yusef, as has been already intimated, was notorious for giving long credit to the younger sons of old Cadis, and to other young branches of those venerable genealogical trees with which every great city abounds, who only wait for the cutting down of the parent-trunk to shoot up from the roots into existence themselves. In the opinion of these patronising young gentlemen, Yusef was allowed to confer a great deal of *credit* on the good city of Bagdad: it was a virtue of such un-

common occurrence in a tradesman, that it was both graceful and grateful in these promising scions to confess as much. But with the old gentlemen, their fathers, this rare quality in a tailor, and a Turk too, was considered a vice not to be tolerated.

Yusef had, indeed, two faults, which impartial history cannot disguise: his charges were suspected, by those good Mussulmen who *did* pay, to be rather exorbitant, and it was sometimes whispered that he made the elderlies who did pay reimburse him for those younglings who only promised to pay. His second, and more heinous, offence, was an imputed indulgence in a certain forbidden juice, which, though a Mussulman born and bred, he had a most Christian and heretical craving after,—wine! If he had been any thing nobler than a constructor of pelisses, he would have been more closely looked after by the Faithful; but as a tailor all the world over (so general is prejudice) is considered, bodily, as no more than the fractional part of a man, his soul, by the same calculation, could only be reckoned as the fractional part of a soul, and was, therefore, considered unworthy of the care and cure of Mahomedans and Moollahs who had entire souls to be saved. Indulgence in any thing that is forbidden cannot, however, long escape with impunity, whether in wives or wine; and so it happened to the worthy Yusef, for a judgment came upon him at a moment when he would rather have suspected the most improbable thing to be probable—such as the undemanded payment of a bill of ten

years' standing, or the undisputed settlement of one of much less venerability, but equal exorbitancy.

Yusef had a bosom friend, named Jaffer Yanzeddin, a small officer of the law, and the reputed son of a greater—a fellow remarkable for his perseverance in bringing a debtor to a due sense of the immediate necessity of paying down his piastres, or else of taking the consequences of his inadvertency, and the neglect of his persuasions to that course: indeed, he had often been employed by the patient Yusef in processes of that nature; and his employer himself acknowledged, in his praise, that if Jaffer was instructed to demand payment, he never left his victim till he had duly come down with his dinaars.

It was on a compulsory occasion of this kind that Yusef and Jaffer met, after sunset, in a caravanserai convenient for their purpose, where a liquor of the forbidden sort was surreptitiously sold to the backsliding faithful, under the saving name of sherbet with a blush on it. They had swallowed four flasks of this strong water of sin, when the mutual rogues began to make themselves merry with each other's infirmities; and as there was something like a coincidence between them, Yusef having lost his left eye, and Jaffer his right, it was agreed, in their drunkenness, that they should take chances which should lend the other his eye, that one of the two, at least, might be perfect in that visual respect. In as choicely-written Arabic as they could write, it was settled and signed, that he to whom the two eyes fortunately fell

should either receive the eye itself, or a considerable consideration for the use which the original owner put it to during the succeeding twelve moons. Lots were then drawn, and the acquisition fell to Jaffer. This being clearly understood and acknowledged, two more flasks of the forbidden were ordered, and being duly swallowed, they parted for that night without intending it—for they were no sooner out of doors, than one reeled to the east, and the other to the west; and as they could not thus, conveniently, overtake each other by two such opposite courses, Jaffer gave up his friend, and pitched into the porch of a mosque to sleep himself sober; and Yusef, equally resigned, dropped at the door of a debtor to do the same,—for if there is anything in this world which can bring a tailor to his sober senses, it is his neighbourhood to a customer who owes him for his last suit or two.

As soon as Jaffer had opened his one eye to the new sunrise, he remembered the agreement of the night before, and in the true spirit of his employment, and as became a lesser limb of the law, determined to make Yusef abide by it, either in the letter or the spirit. Accordingly, the worthy tailor had scarcely opened his shop before Jaffer had already made a formal demand of his right eye. The astonished tailor first rubbed it with his fingers, and then stared with all its wonder at the application; but Jaffer was not to be outstared by a one-eyed sewer of pelisses, as he, indeed, told him, and insisted on the bargain legally made being legally performed. Yusef then attempted

to laugh him out of his demand: he might as soon have laughed a lamb out of the possession of a lion, or a miser out of his gold, by calling it dross and dust.

"You will not, then," demanded Jaffer, "give up the eye which I have fairly won, nor pay me for the use of it, thou slave?"

"Slave!" reiterated Yusef, indignantly, "how long has your beard been permitted to grow, that you call me slave? What dirt do you think you have at your feet that you spurn at me? Things, forsooth, have come to a pretty pass when the dust of Bagdad is flung at the beards of its citizens!"

"Will you pay me?" vociferated Jaffer.

"No," vociferated the tailor, as loudly; "and if you urge me upon so mad a bargain, remember where it was made, and under what sinful circumstances—Mahomet pardon me, for a bad Mussulman! Dare again to mention it, and I'll to the Cadi, and have that throat of thine thoroughly throttled, for swallowing forbidden wine!"

"So, so, wilt thou?" coolly remarked Jaffer: "the race is sometimes to the swift, and be it my fault if I am not first accuser;" and ere the surprised Yusef had had time to compose himself to reason, Jaffer had got two hundred yards start of him down the street to the Cadi's. Whilst Yusef was conjecturing what turn the affair might take, he was struck into congealment by the sudden appearance of two officers of justice, who, all unanointed and unannealed as he was, dragged him before the inexorable Cadi of the city of Bagdad.

Jaffer had the secret ear of the court in his favour, for he had been employed, but a few days previously, at Yusef's suit, to dun the hopeful son of the Cadi for a debt due for certain suits; and Jaffer had been so extremely polite to the young gentleman, as to inform him that he was coming upon that disagreeable errand, and that he had better keep out of the way—not that he would have seen him if he had met him.

"So, slave," said the Cadi, in no very clement tones, to the chap-fallen Yusef, "you have, it seems, broken the inviolable laws of our holy religion, and drank forbidden wine, which he who tastes must die; and during this deadly state of sin, have dared to part with the use of one of the most precious members of your vile, unbelieving body; and now, in your more sober moments, would fain evade the penalty of a sin which whoso indulges in is thus, at some time or other, betrayed by into some enormity: but know from me, dog, that thy sobriety to-day shall not save thee from the penalty of thy drunkenness of last night! Therefore, instantly perform thy agreement with this honest man, and yield up thy remaining eye, as the most lenient punishment which I can inflict on thee for violating the sacred law of the prophet. Officers, see that he complies, or force him to it! I will not anoint my beard this day till I have seen justice done on this blasphemous defier of our holy religion!"

Here a worthy leech, or surgeon, who was present, suggested to the consideration of the Cadi,—that if his decree was performed to the letter, the eye which was

plucked out of the head of the offender could by nothing less than a physical miracle be of use to the complainant in his head; for it was a thing impossible in nature, and unknown to science, for one man to see with the eye of another man.

Here the Cadi gave a 'humph!' of hesitation, and then, stroking his beard, inquired of the culprit—"What, fellow, since I am disposed to be merciful, canst thou afford to pay this worthy man, Jaffer, as a consideration for the use of thine eye, which is already forfeited?"

"Why, most clement of Cadis——"

"No sneering, slave!" hinted the Cadi, "or the bowstring shall immediately twist your sarcastic face into a shape more hideous than nature gave it!"

"I sneer at your excellency?" quailed the terrified tailor; "I should as soon dare to sneeze at your excellency! I assure the mirror of serenity and cream of the milk of mercy, that I am as humble in his sublime presence as a lamb in the lair of the lion."

"What wilt thou pay, fellow, I again demand of thee?" asked the Cadi, who evidently began to be impatient for his breakfast.

"Why," said the unlucky Yusef, with much innocent reluctance, "if I may mention such a matter in the presence of the very excess of justice,—if your lordship's excellent but extravagant son, Mustapha the all-accomplished——"

"What of my son, slave?"

"Would pay me," resumed the diffident sufferer,

"for the two costly dresses, valued at a hundred tomâns a suit, which have made him splendid as the sun to look upon, and worthy to be followed by the moon, but for which he is still my debtor,—I could pay a pretty reasonable sum."

This was an insinuation not to be borne. "What!" exclaimed the indignant Cadi, "thou slave of slaves—thou dirt of Bagdad, my worthy son, Mustapha the magnificent, confer on such a wretch as thou art the high honour of being his clothier? Impossible! Officers, strangle me this dog on the instant!"

"You may strangle me, my lord; but it is, nevertheless, true as the Koran and the mission of Mahomet!"

"I will not hear another word!" said the Cadi, rising.

Yusef, however, would be heard, and went on: "I gave the longest credit to heirs in expectancy: this has made me the wretch I am!—If one only of the respected old gentlemen whose worthy sons I have trusted would die, (I select no one myself—it might be thought invidious,) I should then be enabled to live; but your creaking doors hang so unnecessarily long on the hinges, that honest creditors wait at them till the dust rises over their feet."

Oh Yusef, Yusef! where was thy guardian genius, that he did not clap the seal of silence on thy unguarded lips, and deter thee from touching on a subject the most painful to fathers' ears—the debts of their undutiful sons? It was the most impolitic reminiscence

of which thou couldst have been guilty; but your tailor's memory, in all ages and in all countries, has ever harped upon the same unpleasant string!

It seemed evident to the court that this unlucky suggestion had turned the scale of justice completely against him. If he had had, ready signed, a receipt in full of all demands on the Cadi's son, he might have ridden in the other scale; but to come with a bold declaration of debts due from a Cadi's son to the Cadi his father put clemency out of the question; and Justice pulled the bandage over her eyes, that she might not behold the injustice she was about to commit.

"Strangle the unbelieving dog immediately," commanded the most clement of Cadis; "I'll hear no more of his vile blasphemies!"

The twain attentive eunuchs who held the two ends of the bowstring were about to perform the last office which any Mussulman who comes under their hands does *not* positively insist upon being punctually performed, when Jaffer suggested a pause: it was, indeed, a respite to poor Yusef, and certainly spared him the mortification of making a most unpleasant series of shocking noises, which no man, who has a love for the agreeable in sounds, would willingly afflict the exquisite ears of susceptible persons withal.

"Daniel among judges, and Solomon of severity," said Jaffer, "if thou stranglest this wretch, I shall be deprived of my just demands. It were better that he be

permitted to live till justice is satisfied—then strangle him as soon as possible afterwards."

"Wisely urged, honest fellow!" quoth the Cadi: "we will spare him till justice is satisfied, and then strangle he shall, had he twenty necks. Let him, in the meanwhile, pay, for the use of his forfeit eye, twenty dirhems weekly, during twelve moons; and, if he fail, his eye, and body also, be forfeit to thee, his most considerate creditor. Make out the decree, and away with him, for it is now some minutes since my morning coffee was ready. Away with the slave, I say!"

The Cadi rose from the judgment-seat; the officers of the court compelled Yusef to sign the decree, and ere the ink was dry, he was, by the same official persons, rudely pushed out of the court. At the door Jaffer and Yusef jostled against each other, and their one eye a-piece glistened on one another like two swords, that would willingly be at cut and thrust.

"I'll have his twenty dirhems, or I'll have his eye out of his head!" muttered Jaffer, as he went *his* way.

"I'll pay the rapacious rascal his twenty dirhems, but I'll have a drop of the blood of his heart for every dirhem, before I die!" murmured Yusef, as he went *his* way also.

And now began the unmitigable persecution of the poor sewer of seams; for it was soon evident that Jaffer did not care so much for the penalty, as for the

opportunity which that claim afforded him of persecuting his old friend. There was an old hatred subsisting in the breast of Jaffer against Yusef. Being 'better to do in the world' than himself, Yusef had won the hand of Zaide, a fair Georgian, on whom Jaffer also had fixed an affectionate one eye. This was a grievance of three years' rankling, and now came the time for revenge. He watched him, therefore, as one owl watches another with a mouse which he would fain have caught himself. On the following Friday, being the Sabbath-day of all good Mussulmen, he detected the sewer performing something in the way of his profession on a poor pelisse then undergoing repairs. "Ho, ho," said the inflexible creditor, chuckling, "this is the way you employ *my* eye on the Sabbath!" and by the morning's dawn of the next day Yusef was haled before the Cadi.

"It was agreed between us, my lord the Cadi," said Jaffer, "that this fellow was to use *his* eye, which now, by your decree, is *mine*, only during the working part of the week?"

"Certainly," answered the Cadi.

"Yet it was but yesterday, my lord, on the Sabbath of all righteous Mussulmen, that I detected him working away with it with as little remorse as if it had been his own! This is a barefaced breach of agreement, a defiance of your lordship's mandate, and I demand justice."

"You shall have it," said the Cadi; and it was immediately decreed, that Yusef had no right to use his

eye, professionally, save only during six days of the week. He was accordingly commanded, in future, on the going down of the sun on the sixth day, to repair to the Cadi's hall of justice, then and there to have his eye sealed up with black wax, and the official seal impressed upon it; and so it was to remain, till the sun of the seventh day had descended, when he might open his eye and his shop as usual; but if he broke the seal before that time, death by the bowstring was the slightest penalty for his contempt of the sacred signet.

This mandate he complied with during some weeks, and paid his dirhems regularly enough into court; but, finding trade totally at a stand, he refused to pay any longer for the use of an eye which was useless. He was, therefore, dragged once more before the Cadi, who now decreed, that he should either pay the demand of Jaffer, or his eye should be sealed up for ever.

"God is great! Therefore seal it up!" said Yusef, whilst a tear stood in it; "for it is useless, save to behold the number of my enemies!" Here poor Yusef looked heart-broken; and Jaffer gave a triumphant roll of his malicious eye.

"He is an incorrigible knave," pronounced the Cadi; "I place him out of the pale of the law and in the hands of his creditor, to do what shall seem best and most advisable with him."

Jaffer chuckled at the chance, and Yusef was summarily dismissed—that is, he was tumbled out of the Court as speedily as four officers could eject him. "I may now hunt him like a despised dog through the

city," said Jaffer, "for he is on the wrong side of the sanctuary, and I will, as he shall see!" Accordingly, wherever the wretched remnant went, he was at his heels, roaring out, "Pay me for the use of your eye, or I'll have it out of your head, if there's a thumb in Bagdad!" Yusef looked indignant; but who heeds the indignation of a tailor? He saw him reading the news on a bench at a coffee-house door: "Pay me for the use of your eye, or give up the gazette to the next gentleman!" demanded the inexorable Jaffer. Yusef looked up, and then read on, and kept the paper longer than usual. The next day he caught him ogling a pretty slave, as she passed by his door: "Pay me for that delight, you old sinner and slave, or, by the Prophet, your wife shall know of your amorous tricks!" threatened the turbulent Jaffer. Yusef heard, but pretended not to hear him. Even in the mosque on Fridays, when he was religiously absorbed in regarding the inspired pages of the Koran, Jaffer moved on his knees up to the spot where he also was kneeling, and, whispering in his ear, demanded the old due. "Wretch!" exclaimed Yusef, "cannot even this sacred place protect me from your enmity, nor restrain your avarice! Have I touched the Word of the Prophet with unclean hands—have I held it lower than my girdle; or of what profanation have I been guilty, that you use me like an infidel? Breathe another breath in my ear, and I'll set the Faithful about your's." Jaffer was somewhat alarmed at this menace, and dared say no more within the sacred walls.

His demand, however, had been so often dinned in Yusef's ears in all public parts of the city, that there was not a citizen unacquainted with the origin of it. If he went into the cloth-bazaar, and by accident made use of such words, as "I *see* cloth is not so good to-day," or "I *see* that it is dearer than yesterday," he was retorted upon—"You see! you pretend to see, indeed!—pay Jaffer Yanzeddin for the use of your eye before you pretend to see for yourself!" In short, there was not a boy in Bagdad who did not ring in his ear the unceasing demand and recommendation of "Pay for the use of your eye!"

Yusef now found that he must resort to stratagem to put off Jaffer. He met him in one of his old resorts, and the old demand was made in the old terms. "Now Jaffer, my worthy friend," said the disconsolate debtor, in tones which might have disarmed that gaunt bailiff who, some time or other, demands of all men that debt due to Nature, which all must pay either by instalments or in one sudden sum—"my excellent friend, Jaffer, have some compassion for a man who is unfortunate! I know that the law is o' thy side; but a gentle hand is better than a strong arm."

"Will you pay me my dirhems?" demanded the inexorable creditor.

"I *will* pay thee—by the stone on which Mahomet is to sit on the day of judgment, I will! Come to-morrow, and take thy demand—I am ready to pay every debt which I owe in the world." Jaffer doubted him, but notwithstanding appeared satisfied.

Yusef then hurried home:—"Wife," said he, "the first thing you do, at sunrise to-morrow, lay me out as defunct, and when that rascal, Jaffer, calls for his twenty dirhems, tell him I am departed for Paradise. Then weep over me with as much sincerity as if you wished me really so, and he will be deceived; we will then fly this hateful city, where the poor and the honest have no friends."

The morning came, and with it came the punctual creditor. "In the name of Allah," said he, in a hypocritical tone of voice, "health to every body that hath a soul!" and in the same breath inquired, "Is Yusef stirring?" and "Where are my twenty dirhems?"

"Yusef stirring!" exclaimed Zaide, looking very disconsolate—"Alas! poor sinner, he will stir no more in this bustling world! His last garment is made, and his thread of life used up! There he lies—look on him!" And there Yusef lay indeed, stiff and stately enough, and counterfeiting death to the life. His face was pale with rice-powder, and two pieces of lead were placed upon his eye-lids to keep them down.

"Dog—heretic dog!" roared out Jaffer, "to die in my debt! But I'll have his avaricious soul back from Paradise. Ho, Yusef! my friend—I come to pay thee Mustapha's bill!" (The two pieces of lead began to tremble.) "Thou shalt pay me twenty dirhems out of it, and I will then pardon thee the remainder." These were tempting considerations to return to life; but the wary tailor, just as he was about to say "I

take the bill and your offer," began to smell a bad egg in the sallad, and looked as dead as ever.

"Will nothing bring thy starved soul back, thou infidel dog!" roared Jaffer, as he snatched up a sleeve-board, and applied it with a hearty smack on his right cheek: "take that, then, and that!" and he gave him one to match on the left. The two lumps of lead flew from his eye-balls, and up flew also the tailor.

"Why, thou ruffian, thou extortioner, thou Greek-grinder, wilt not let a dead man carry his one eye to the grave with him? Bismillah! is my head under your arm, that you would pluck out my beard? is my foot at your mercy, that you bastinado thus fiercely? But have at thee, since blows are thy blessings!" And in half a minute there was not a moveable missile at hand which was not also at the head of Jaffer: the wife, too, played her part, and dedicated her choicest delph to the due reception of so welcome a guest. In short, Jaffer found the garrison too strong, and, like a good general, made a hasty retreat where a slow one was not allowed. In the same breath he ran to the Cadi, and related the deception and reception he had met with at his debtor's hands.

"By the stone which the Prophet carried on his arm in the battles of the faith, thou shalt be righted!" promised the enraged Cadi. A mandate was immediately made out, commanding Yusef to satisfy his demands in four days, or look to be strangled on the fifth. On receiving this intimation, poor Yusef was in despair.

"My whole stock is not now, thanks to my debtors,

worth half so much as is demanded of me! There is, therefore, no escape for me but to die indeed! I will do this, rather than compromise such a merciless exaction: for if I stay here I shall be strangled, and if I fly the city I shall be hanged, both of which are disagreeable to a man of any feeling. Hear me, wife! I am determined to die—for my credit and cash are all gone, and there is not a close-fisted father of the many open-handed sons that have ruined me who seems likely to die: what, then, is the use of life to me? Yes, I must die! Hear, then, my last request, dear Zaide! Let my grave be strewn with red earth, for I wish to lie decently in death as becomes a true believer; and lay by my side a pretty large cudgel, for though the Devil may not think of losing his time in trying to tempt my soul from Paradise, yet that worse than devil, Jaffer, may perhaps insult my grave; when, if a tailor's spirit in death has more courage than his body had in life, I'll break every bone in his brutal carcase."

"Nay, do not talk so wildly and wickedly," counselled the wife; "live, and you may get over this persecution. God is great!"

"What, would you have me disgrace the necks of my fathers, by living four days longer to be strangled on the fifth?" demanded Yusef. "No, no—I must die, but not by my own hand—that were a sin against nature: go, then, dear wife, go for Ali Benbaddan, the physician; if he attends, I have not three days to live."

The dealer in drugs and death was accordingly sent

for: he came; the patient insisted that he was ill—the doctor took his word for it—physicked, bled, and blistered him, and on the evening of the third day inquired who was to pay the defunct's bill, for he reckoned him already dead even while yet alive. "Pay him two sequins," said Yusef in a low tone, "and discharge him; I can find the remainder of the way to Paradise without his assistance. Do not weep, light of my eyes, that I am going to that pleasant place! You are young and handsome, and may get another Yusef; but take care that he has *two* eyes, and that he is not sinfully fond of forbidden wine—for you now behold the fatal effects of a husband's having but one eye, and a partiality for moistening it with something stronger than his tears. Farewell! I feel that the doctor has done his work like a leech of long experience. Take home Ali Mouseff's pelisse, and tell him I could not finish the lining, for death——!" Here he swooned, and in a few moments more the soul of Yusef Zanballat, the trusting tailor of Bagdad, set out on its journey to Paradise. Zaide wept a shower of tears over the departed. She was now a widow, young, and very handsome, and her forlorn condition was consequently very pitiable, and her inconsolableness extremely natural.

On the fourth day Jaffer came with the officers of the Cadi to seize the living body of his dilatory debtor; but what was his rage to find that Yusef had really given him the slip! "The curse of the Prophet follow him! But I'll be revenged yet!" said he, as

he rushed out of the house: the officers followed him, and found him before them in the presence of the Cadi.

"Light of the day, and substitute for the Sun," said Jaffer, as he kissed the earth, "Yusef Zanballat, my debtor, has fraudulently died, and I am cheated out of my twenty dirhems! Will your excellency suffer this?"

"Tush, man, what would you have me do?" asked the clement administrator of justice. "The debt of nature swallows up all lesser demands—he has paid this, yet you are not satisfied. If he died a good Mussulman, you will find him in Paradise—if he did not you must seek him in the other place. My warrant does not reach either, so make the best of a bad basket of figs, and be content." The Cadi was evidently so, for he reckoned that one debt, at least, of his dear son Mustapha's contracting was thus quietly wiped off. Jaffer, however, looked anything but content, and muttered and meditated, and murmured and mused, and so left the court.

In the meantime the persecuted Yusef was buried; and the day after his body was laid in earth, Jaffer, as he passed his grave, (where no turban or column testified that below laid a true believer,) spurned at the mound which covered him, and vociferated, with savage sternness, "Pay me for the use of your eye—or I will follow thee over the bridge Sirat itself, but I will be paid!"

The rage of the remorseless lion has been tamed by beauty; a thought of Zaide, his former love, and now

a handsome widow, tamed the implacable Jaffer. Soothing the ferment of his anger with a double dose of opium, till he really began to have amiable thoughts about him, and having carefully abluted his person, perfumed his beard, and set his best turban with a jaunty air on his head, Jaffer repaired to the earthly mansion of his late friend; but what was his rage, disappointment, and despair, to find that the dove was flown. The fact was, that the Cadi, as well as Jaffer, had long had an eye on the fair Zaide, and by presents and persuasions had at last induced the disconsolate creature to accept a vacant couch in his harem. Jaffer learnt these tidings from the neighbours, who were full of the amorous news; but though he raged inwardly, and now cursed his own tardiness, and now the Cadi's speed at being before him in the field, he dared not utter a public syllable of complaint, and was compelled to chew the bitter cud of chagrin in silence.

The moon of Mohurrum had passed away, since Yusef had been buried; and with the last day of its waning expired the term during which he was to have been under instalments to Jaffer for the use of his own eye. In the evening of that day, that considerate creditor passed through the mournful field where even Mussulmen lie in hopes of a joyful resurrection. Briers and thorns had by this time overrun the mound under which the persecuted Yusef slept in peace; and, as usual, Jaffer spurned at the spot with his old execration of his old friend; when a thorn, striking through

his slipper into his foot, struck such an agony into his heart, that he almost fell on the ground with the pain. He limped away from the spot, and arriving faint and sick at his house, threw himself on a couch. In a few hours the wound festered, in a few more it mortified, and ere the sun of the next day had gone down, Jaffer Yanzeddin, the implacable creditor, also had his passport made out for Paradise, or the other place—acknowledging, in his last moments, that his death fell on him deservedly for carrying his resentment beyond the grave!

TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES.

No. II.

THE PLEASURES OF WINTER.

WINTER, by the frivolous, is not considered a period of pleasure; but to minds of a rational cast it is a season of deep reflection, sublime speculation, and close investigation. It is a time of hope and recollection; hope of the delights then in the germ, and recollection of those we have possessed in other seasons. It is in winter that we enjoy the recollected pleasures of summer, and enjoy them more than when they lay about our feet, and hung on branches within the reach of our hands; for it is then that they revive in our memories with more warmth of colouring and beauty of appearance than they actually wore when we might have enjoyed them.

How often do scenes which we pass through joylessly or in pain, or without emotion or feeling of any kind, either of pleasure or weariness, return back upon the memory, clothed in a more verdant green, glowing with a more golden light, studded with more nume-

rous flowers, and musical with every rural sound, mingled into one beautiful and continuous peal of that earthly harmony which heaven has given us as a fore-hearing of those sublimer harmonies that, in its everlasting bowers, take the imprisoned soul, 'and lap it in elysium.'

The restless shout of the cuckoo, which was wont, in our school-boy days, to startle us to a pleasant wondering at that 'wandering voice,' and 'made us look a thousand ways, in bush, and tree, and sky,' breaks upon the ear like some old forgotten tune that stirs an old pulse of joy within us. The breath of the violet again breathes about us like the breath of some beautiful being whom we have loved, but have been separated from, and embalms the soul with a perfume more precious than any of Arabia. The daisy, 'whom men callen daie's eie, or else the eie of the daie,' unfolds its lids of dewy rays, and shines in our remembered path like 'the morning star, day's harbinger.' The tawny primrose is imaged to our minds, squatting like a gipsy-girl by the side of some green lane we remember to have plodded through 'with melancholy step and slow.' The wood-side cowslip swings like a golden canopy, hung there to screen the delicate Titania during her moonlight masque and revelry, lest her fair queenship's skin should get moon-tanned or star-freckled,—and we behold an use, a beauty, and an imagination in it, which then 'we wot not of.' 'Such tricks hath strong imagination,'—such are our winter recollections of summer.

O Winter, ruler of th' inverted year,
Thy scattered hair with sleet-like ashes fill'd,
Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fring'd with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapp'd in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urg'd by storms along its slippery way,—
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art!

Winter is the season of domestic delight—of sociality—of fire-side enjoyment—of twilight musing—of that mild melancholy, which whispers us of the coming winter of our lives, mixed with the cheerful hope that we have yet some delicious days to call our's, ere the May of our being falls into 'the sear and yellow leaf,' and its autumn dies in the lap of winter. To the inhabitant of the southern countries,—to the Frenchman, who is never happy but when at his door, or out of it; to the Spaniard, who loves his noon-siesta under olive-shades, and the light bolero and lively click of the castanet at evening, on the sun-burnt grass at his door; to the water-surrounded Venetian, with his wind-admitting lattices and fireless halls,—it is indeed a 'drerie seson;' but to the Englishman, with his sea-coal fire, home-born happiness, cleanliness and comfort, it is the most enjoying period of the year.

We are not a summer people, like the French, the bees, and the butterflies—we work as diligently as 'the honey-people,' and fill our homes with sweets, not in the summer only, but throughout the year: while our

extravagant neighbours are butterflies in summer, and grubs in winter. The comfortable condition of our homes is our aim and happiness: it is our Tuileries, and our Boulevard du Temple all the year; and is without the debauchery of the one, or the frivolity of the other. Let an Englishman have his warm fire, and warmer friends—his old faces, old wines, old books, old songs, old habits, and old slippers, and the world may swing on its hinges which way it will, and the Dutch take Holland all the year round. For my part, (if I may be allowed to descend from generals to particulars—and I shall take the authority of merry Montaigne and the license of the day as my permit,) it is the sole wish I have now in life, to retire from this bustling world to the quiet corner of a suburban cottage, from whence I might behold that many-headed monster, the town, at a distance, hear it faintly roar, and feel that it could no longer break up the quiet of my mind, and flutter whole coveys of winged ideas away, as the haughty Roman fluttered the feeble Volscians at Corioli; no longer make me fear its temptations, and regret its ill-apportioned riches and poverty, its waste and want.

Winter is with many (and it should be with all who have to give) the season of charity, of compassion for the poor, and of active relief of their necessities. The hand which bestows may then be cold, but the heart which prompted it to give is warm as the sultry Ind; the inner man growing warmer in proportion with the

coldness of the external man. It is not here that I would apostrophize the Howards who are dead; but I may be privileged to suggest, that there is no one thing which adds to the warmth of a winter fire so much as the feeling, that we have made the hearth of the needy bright with comfortable coals, and the bed of the afflicted warm with winter wools.

Winter is, besides, the season of literary enjoyment. It is then that the old book seems new; and the new one, if it is worth treasuring, may then be born again, to live to a good old age in our recollection.

These are the general pleasures of Winter. We will now glance at the particular pleasures of a day in winter, and first describe those of the morning. Let us suppose that we rise from a refreshing sleep, undisturbed by the howling of the winds, which flapped their ineffectual wings against our chamber-shutters,—the turbulence and war without only rendering more silent and slumberous the peace within. We descend to the breakfast parlour, where the first look which meets ours is an old and warm one,—one which is ever young, with its bright smile, (like an aged friend with a warm heart,)—I mean, a winter fire. A sea-coal fire is the domestic sun of winter, and 'makes a sunshine in' what would be without it 'a dreary place;' and, like the sun of summer, it has its flowers too, which, perhaps, the eyes of warm imaginations only can behold, but which glow under its influence and genial heat, and bloom daily, till their more visible brethren of the

spring come smiling back from the east, and the seasons move over the green earth, flinging from their laps 'the yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.'

The next feeling which strikes us with a sense of complete comfort, and induces that rubbing of the hands, by which men throughout the world (though they differ in manners, language, and their conceptions of comfort) so naturally express inward satisfaction at outward circumstances,—is the welcome sight of the breakfast-table laid out for the immediate appetite, if we are healthy enough to have it; and the expected one, if we are patient enough to wait for it. If we are pale students,—lone, unblest bachelors,—this is a pleasing 'sober certainty of waking bliss.' But if we are happy enough to be married, there is a sight still more pleasurable,—that of a handsome 'shining morning face,' meeting our smile of freshness with one more beautiful, our morning salutation with two or three words of endearment, half drowned in the music of that finest of all the stringed instruments, a woman's heart, like pearls dissolving in nectar.

And now we are irrecoverably seated, with our feet (made susceptible of the cold by the softness of sleep) on the warm, cozy woolliness of a hearth-rug; or if we are chilly and luxurious enough to indulge ourselves, under pretence of warming our feet, and grow feet-on-the-fenderishly inclined, it is an innocent guilt, and a pleasing piece of satisfaction, inasmuch as we then have the option of toasting them to our particular private liking.

And next we lay hands on the paper (say *The Post*), as a big-boyish old friend of mine says, "as if we meant to go over it, like any other post, at a jump;" when, upon casting our eyes at the toast-and-butter references in the margin, (for your nicest man abroad is your most anti-nice and slovenly reader of a newspaper at home,) we perceive that we have unconsciously gone through the usual infliction of toast and coffee; and laying down the paper as uninteresting, which has for an hour engaged our attention, we conclude that we have breakfasted, and conclude our breakfast—and stirring up the fire, stir up ourselves to the other pleasures of the day.

Having so far indulged that spoiled child, that human infirmity, hunger, or that appetite of the mind, the habit of eating 'a bit of something,' which is an artificial, and more dainty and inordinate than the natural, hunger, we begin to think seriously of what nobler pleasures are possible for the day. Is the day fine, clear, and frosty? There are the pleasures of a healthy walk, and the wholesome inflictions of the north wind; the north-east, with its oblique, showery dartings of something like pins and needles (by poets and naturalists called sleet) directly aimed at our cheeks, as if they were targets made for their skilful exercises; the east wind, with its keen, bitter, biting shrewdness; and the west wind, with its warmer airs, like the warm breathings of beauty into the face of age,—whispering to us remembrances of the youth-giving spring, and inspiring us with hopes of the flowery and joy-giving

summer. Is that dazzling 'white wonder,' the snow, blanching the green and pastoral earth, if we are suburbanly situated, or dwelling deeper in the sylvan valleys of nature? There is the fresh morning delight of treading upon a carpet whiter than the down of swans, and soft as the cygnet's breast; and of beating out a path through fields, and over heath and common, where none have trodden before; and the pleasure of imagining ourselves adventurous travellers, imprinting our way through Siberian snows, far from the home we loved, and the beings we love; and the still greater pleasure of knowing and feeling that we *are not*, but that we have a domestic fire-side, which is brightening up for us, and hearts circling around it, still warmer: the comfort of knowing, that though we are cold, almost to the core, with loitering to see the snow wind-wafted like chaff about the air, or driven under the half-hidden hedges; or see it swept into wave-like wreaths under the crags, and hills, and rising grounds, spreading a bed for Winter to repose on, in his annual journey over the earth; or to watch the heavy-hanging trees tossing their arms in the air, and throwing off their fleecy load upon the lap of the earth, who loves the protecting warmth and gentle weight of it; or to listen to the 'tootling' song of the merry robin, (the true emblem of a true poet, who cares not for 'poverty and a' that,' so he may get a crumb here, and a berry there, and now and then an attentive ear to his song); or to note the busy and noisy crow, 'foraging for sticks and straw,' and the ravenous and hungry raven, winging

his way like a dark spirit, 'seeking what he may devour.'

Or is the day rainy, and the fields drenched, and the roads too muddy for pedestrianism? Let us, in the absence of horse, chaise, or carriage, (things not to be enjoyed by every one, and many who possess them do not enjoy them, because they have not wanted them, or because they make blessings, which should only be a relief to the fatigued, and a help to the infirm, a means of idleness and indolent indulgence,) let us, I say, cultivate our fire-side, and renew our acquaintance with some favourite old author, or form a friendship with a new one. We may consider a good author (an early poet, or modern one, or an essayist of the English Augustan age) as an acquaintance, whom we are fortunate enough to have always with us in our studies, to reason with and counsel us on the business of life, and teach us the true pleasures of it; or at our table, to laugh with us, and wile away the slow December hours with his wit, and 'quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,'

'Of winters, past or coming, void of care,
Well pleased with delights which present are;'

and by the inspiring voice of his songs of summer and spring, lift us from the thorn-stool of restlessness to sit on the sofa of ease; and with some sweet words (of sovereign power to stir the sluggish spirit, as with a magician's muttered charm or some wonder-working balsam) cleanse the sick heart of the 'lees and settlings of the melancholy blood,' and give to our disor-

dered and aching senses 'calm contemplation and poetic ease.'

Or are ye men of leisure about town? There are a thousand ways of plucking the grey hairs from the head of Winter. There are Museums, the British in particular, in itself a winter of amusement, of admiration, of grandeur and glory; with its noble fragments of Grecian art, its athletic Theseus, and beautiful Ilissus, the father-parents of English Theseuses and Ilissuses yet unborn. Then there are galleries of paintings, private and public; the Leicester and the Stafford, private yet public; and the West collection, public yet private, for few of the "*discerning* public" see their way there. But if you are of those who love and follow the idle businesses of life more industriously and devotedly than its real and proper business, of all its most delicious hours which are melted down to moments, those which are dissolved in the few resorts of Taste and the Arts are perhaps the noblest, the fleetest, and the best. A 'drop in,' as it is called, at Colnaghi's, is as pleasing a 'fall of man' as we have heard of and tried; and is considerably more independent, in all its circumstances, than an ill-timed dinner 'drop-in' upon a doubtful friend, just five minutes after the exit of the salt. It is, indeed, cozily agreeable, when the weather is cold as Chastity used to be, and it is quite a Lapland kind of luxury to meet with an old friend who looks warmly on one. We candidly confess that we love, better than frying or frisking with grasshoppers in the burnt meadows of summer, (though they click their shrill casta-

nets in a very lively Spanish sort of spirit,) in the short days of winter to stretch our whole length originals in the comfortable picture-shaded shop, or rather cabinet, we have just mentioned; and there wile the wintry hours away, in almost the very presence of all the great and the little, of the past and the present. There are found portfolios of men of all ranks, reputations, sentiments, affections—the most various and varying, the most opposite and opposing—all mingled in that harmonious communion with each other, which only death, the great peace-maker, can bring about. It is pleasant, too, to think that the more lenient hand of Art sometimes succeeds in allaying all their quarrels, as with a charming-rod, bringing literary, political, and personal enemies together, and laying them cheek by cheek with each other 'in rest and quietness!'

Here Johnson looks Herrick (the Horace, Catullus, and Anacreon of England) in the face, whom he vilely neglected for the psalm-singing Sprat; there Pope eyes the men he scourged in his Dunciad, and does not seem to dread the horse-whipping he deserved in return; there good-natured Goldsmith smiles upon Colman the First, as if he had forgiven him the private predamning of his 'right merrie comedie;' there Savage shows like a civilized gentleman; and Otway does not want bread, if you may judge by the comely plenitude of his cheeks, and the cleanly perspicuousness of his lavendered linen; there Voltaire looks Shakspeare in his wiser and more human-natured face, without sneering in it; and there Chatterton, he

'Who fled in youth from out the bounds of time,
Since nothing here was equal to his thought,'

looks Horace Walpole in the face, as wildly as if he had not yet forgiven him the cruelty of his neglect.

Imagine us, gentle reader, if thou hast leisure to do it, seated at our ease in such a silent repository as this, where the living dead, and the dead living, are as it were entombed in massive folios, and preserved awhile from the defacing fingers of Time. It is here we may 'forget ourselves to' *connoisseurs*, and unguardedly chat, careless of the consequences of our presumption, of good taste, and its beauties and agreeableness; of bad taste, and its affectations. Let us, then, with learned finger and thumb, (which have lifted, in their time, more men of weight than blind Sampson in his dying strength threw down,) explore and turn over these unbound sheets of the great volume of Nature's works—these fallen leaves of the tree of life. And having enjoyed either of the luxuries of taste we have pointed out for the enjoyment of all, we may be said to have passed a winter morning delightfully, if not usefully.

And now has arrived that necessary pause in the pursuit of one species of taste, and the beginning time of another and inferior one,—the hour of dinner. This duty to our bodies being done, thankfully and moderately, and an hour being allowed after dinner for safe digestion and bodily repose, and a glass of wine or two for cheerfulness, let us to the enjoyments of the mind again,—to books, pictures, or fire-side contemplations,

or to domestic chat, and friendly communion with minds of the same tone, or at least, not of a discordant one; and with these pleasures about us, we may muffle the feet of Time so that we shall not hear his tread, and arrive unconsciously at the hour of twilight and tea. And now, gentle reader, if you are alone, there is not an hour of more fanciful or more grave delight than that which is spent in the half-duskiness and half-illumination of a small, snug room, thoroughly warmed and partially lighted by a good winter-fire.

'Winter, though all thy hours are drear and chill,
Yet hast thou one that welcome is to me;
Ah! 'tis when daylight fades, and noise grows still,
And we afar faintly can darkness see;
Whenas it seems too soon to shut out day
And thought with the intrusive taper's ray:
We trim the fire, the half-read book resign,
And in our easy chairs at ease recline;
Gaze on the deepening sky, in thoughtful fit,
Clinging to light, as loth to part with it:
Then, half asleep, life seems to us a dream,
And magic all the antic shapes that gleam
Upon the walls, by the fire's flickerings made;
And oft we start, surprised, but not dismay'd,
Ah! when life fades, and death's dark hour draws near,
May we as timely muse, and be as void of fear!'

Cowper, who was the poet of 'calm contemplation and poetic ease,' well knew, and as well described, this hour of useful indolence and busy repose—this hour, sacred to recollections, and the domestic lares, or virtues—this hour given to the serious turns of meditation, or else to the sportive service of whim and humorous conception, as you pore among the ever-shifting and glow-

ing coals, and shape to your imaginative eye grim visages and grotesque images, faces and forms of beauty, and likenesses of things—startling your fancy now with toppling towers, and trees falling in flames, and now with fiery volcanoes and burning ships; or create in it a miniature purgatory for the souls of the unsaved sinner-thoughts and beings of your own imagination. The poet of the English hearth and fire-side says of this amusing occupation of idleness—

——— 'Me perhaps,
The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile
With faint illumination, that uplifts
The shadows to the ceiling, there by fits
Dancing uncouthly to the quivering flame.
Not undelightful is an hour to me
So spent in parlour twilight: such a gloom
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,
The mind contemplative, with some new theme
Pregnant, or indisposed alike to all.
'Tis thus the understanding takes repose
In indolent vacuity of thought,
And sleeps, and is refreshed.'

And now arrives the time of tapers and tea. In that pleasantest hour of a winter-day, it is as well to have some friendly faces seated on the warm side of the tea-table, whom you can ask, without any affectation or man-milliner mincing, whether your hyson is to their taste—your toast or muffins to their minds; and whether, in your excessive consideration of their comfort, they can bear a few more coals on what is already an ox-roasting fire. If one of the softer sex preside, it is then pleasant to have your tea sweetened to the taste

of liquid honey from the over-bounty of her sugar-dispensing hand; and much more pleasant is it, to have your bachelor-sourness sweetened by her smile of affection and studiousness of attention. The same social poet has well described this fire-side delight:—

'Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.'

This winter-pleasure being satisfactorily enjoyed, then come the after-pleasures of continued conversation, an hour at whist, and no more—for games should only vary and chequer the hours of the rational fire-sider's evening, not engross and fill them up, to the exclusion of all that is more elevating, wise, good, and immortal,—such as music, selected from Mozart, for its delicate voluptuousness and deep enjoyment; from Handel, for its sacred sublimity; from Winter, for its pathos; from Beethoven, for its power; from Sebastian Bach, for its sustained grandeur; from old Ford, for his 'merry, merry month of May'

'Songs, and sonnets, and rustical roundelays,
Sung by shepherds, and whistled on reeds;'

from Matthew Locke, for the music of his Macbeth, which is worthy of that sublime tragedy; and from Purcel, Arne, Arnold, Dibdin, and Bishop, because they are fine musicians, and ought not to be neglected by Englishmen because they are English.

To vary this delight with some more solid food, good authors should be heard speaking in the persons of a correct, manly reader, or a sensible, womanly one,—selecting such poets and writers, and such parts of them as are new and likely to interest a small circle of persons of taste, or such as are old and well-known, yet are too excellent not to interest them: for there is always, in a fresh reading of an old favourite passage, some new beauty discerned, some forgotten old one re-remembered, or some agreeable recollection suggested of times, thoughts, feelings, and persons gone by, which are revivified, on hearing again what is old and familiar with our memories, 'as household words.' These several delights will very suddenly and agreeably bring the last repast for the day on the table, or supper, which should be light, spare, and cheerful, and such as will give soft slumbers and delicious dreams, if any; there should be a sober quantity of wine, and the viands should be plentifully garnished with words, as much wit as can be struck out in the collision of minds, and as much remark as the many matters which you have seen, read, and heard during the day, shall give birth to. And then, after the usual hearty shake of the hand, and 'Good-bye,' and 'God-bless-you,' and being well advised to take a coach, or an umbrella, or an extra great-coat, each one to his house and bed, and whatever thankful thoughts suggest themselves; and after a serene retrospect of the innocent pleasures of a day in Winter, and the comfortable, but not selfish, reflection that *we* are housed, and happy, and safe

from the storm and the bitter wind which bites and perishes the poor and the houseless,—and a kindly promise to ourselves to do some kindness to-morrow to others, with whom fortune has been unkind, or the recollection of one done to-day,—that softness and serenity will be about our beds which the hard-hearted and the vicious never know. And then 'to each and all good night.'

STORY OF THE POOR MAN OF GENIUS.

THERE is no wreck which is more a sight for pity than that human ruin, an unfortunate man; and no human ruin more pitiable than genius wrecked by the winds and waves of adversity. I have looked on the ivied remains of some ancient castle, once a stronghold for war, and have lamented its pride made humble, its strength half prostrate, and toppling ere it totally fall, like an aged man's—its halls, where thronged the mailed men of chivalry, and the daughters of beauty, whose 'eyes rained influence and judged the prize'; now the dull home of the bat, and toad, and thing obscene,—where, for the roundelay of the minstrel,

> 'The moping owl doth to the moon complain
> Of such as wandering near her secret bower
> Molest her ancient solitary reign.'

And I have looked at that no less noble wreck, that floating castle of the sea, a dismantled vessel of war—lying with bare ribs and broken timbers, on the ignoble bank of a narrow tributary river to its proud parent the Sea, who bore it on her bosom as a mother her child,—where it was now left by the tide like a leviathan of the waters, deserted on a shore too shallow for its mighty

bulk to float over. I have thought of its century of pride, when it was a thing of motion, and almost of life,—when its prow broke the waves before it, as a plough breaks up the earth with its share;—and in imagination have heard the surly thunder of its guns, and seen the destruction of its thunder-bolts, crushing its enemies as with the hand of Death. I have looked with serious thoughts at these mighty things no longer mighty; but none of them have inspired me with that awe which the sight of human intellect in its decay, or neglect, struck on the heart, and drew from the eyes. That a mind which might have enlightened its country—perhaps the world—should have been hidden under obscuring clouds, till that inward light, 'self-fed and self-consumed,' grew dim, and 'paled its ineffectual fire,' throwing out only those faint, intermittent flashes which a dying taper flings momentarily from its socket;—that a voice, which might, but for these neglects, have been heard singing to our ravished ears from 'the third heaven of invention,' should be tremulous, choked, and broken, by vain efforts to reveal feelings which lie too deep for words, to communicate the sorrows of a desolated heart to an ear ever patient to hear the 'simple annals of the poor';—that a heart which might have glowed with the very 'life of life,' and been filled with friendliness for all, with pity for the poor and the unhappy, love for the good and the beautiful, and human kindness for all who are human—and have lived like a fertile and sunny spot in that little world the body of man,—should by neglect alone

become a dreary desert, an unvisited and unweeded garden, choked with the weeds and briers of self-abandonment and hopeless indolence,—without a flower (or with but here and there one, where might have been nothing but one paradise of sweets) to bloom in a barren space, and throw out the perfume of the soul—are indeed causes for pity, that we should painfully see these things, and for regret, that we cannot hope to remedy them.

It is a fault which only 'experience, that makes fools wise,' and wise men wiser, can correct in a young and ardent mind, that, when it first awakes to a consciousness of talent, it is too rash and ungovernable to use its discovery to the best advantage. It no sooner discovers the spring of mind within, than it at once bares it to the broad eye of day; and you must stop, and prostrating yourself like a thankful pilgrim at some sacred fountain, drink with reverence of its new waters, and bless it with a fervent benison, or you are no true worshipper of the Muses. The young man of genius no sooner finds that he has feet for the difficult race of fame than he commences running; and that so fast, that, before half the course is strained over, his powers, too fiercely tried, or too little encouraged to the trial, fail him as suddenly as he found them: he halts in his headlong speed, and the race is lost from his eagerness to win it. Then come present disappointment, backward-looking regret, hope that looks not forward, and pining despondency, regardless and reckless self-abandonment, and, finally, helpless despair.

The first fault of a young author's life is the key to the rest of it; and usually opens the wicket-door to a long and winding walk through that maze of error, which too certainly leads in the end to the desolate bower of disappointment. Inexperience in him is so far a fault, that it is the parent of a large family of young errors. Ignorant of the world, he presumes to teach it, when he should sit as a scholar in its wisdom-giving school: but he is too erratic; he forsakes the lyceums of learning like a truant, and will have no place but the fields for his study—no book but the book of nature to pore upon. He is, perhaps, diligent, and acquires something for himself; and he teaches what he learns as fast as he learns it, instead of nourishing and storing it like 'a seed which, after many days, should bring forth' the fruit of knowledge 'a hundred-fold,'—reminding one of those shallow artificial basins we sometimes meet with in palace-gardens, which pour out as fast as they receive waters not their own, and are full to-day and empty to-morrow—instead of resembling a natural spring, and being an inexhaustible well-head of waters of a constant flow and fulness. Or if he is not so daringly ignorant as to aim at teaching mankind, but only at amusing them, and tunes a romantic harp to tales of love and chivalry, or touches the lyre to tragic story, or indulges only in the capricious flights of wild imagination,—the world has too many stunning realities, too much of natural horror, and too much of unnatural hatred, of brother-nation against brother-nation, of child-land

against father-land, to listen to the beautiful imaginations of the muse. The world, therefore, looks coldly on him, and he in turn looks coldly on the world: this is the first chill his ardent nature receives. He has expected great deference, honour, and public applause; and only two or three followers of his own hurl up their caps in the corner of the hall. He has thought that genius and success are one; he has genius still, but where is success? He at last learns that great talents may be obscured under unfavourable clouds;—that even genius may be born too early or too late for the age. His shining talents are therefore to him like gold to one who perishes of drought in a desert. The spirit which made him independent breaks; and now he looks round for that success at the hand of one which he has failed in obtaining from the hands of many: he seeks a patron, finds one, and proudly bends his head, to be crowned, as he imagines, with the laurels of patronage, but he finds, in the end, that he has been crowned with thorns.

But I cannot better illustrate the progress of an unfortunate man of genius, and finish the picture I have half drawn, than by presenting the sketch of a young author's life, from his May of hope to his December of despair; and this I shall presently give in the words of the unfortunate hero himself.

It is the privilege of a few, that though they play no part on the great stage of life, yet they are sometimes admitted behind the scenes, and behold its deceptions, its puppets, paint, and patchwork. Having had this

privilege, I have not failed to snatch the opportunity of seeing men as they are, and not as they seem to be. Indeed, he who wishes to see the world as it is, should not look at it through the eyes of others, but through that medium which Nature and Reason have given to all men, if they will distinguish for themselves, and not trust implicitly to guides who wilfully and perversely blind themselves to the beauty of the world, and to the single worth and entire value of its many-peopled and and many-passioned cities and citizens.

I was sitting, as is my custom after dinner, in the Chapter Coffee-house, and was employed at that moment in musing on the misfortunes incidental to genius, a subject to which I had been led, from falling in with the ‘ Life of Dermody’ during the morning, when on looking across the room, I observed a semi-genteel figure sliding towards the box in which I was sitting, who, after inquiring for letters, and finding there were none, shrugged up his shoulders with evident disappointment; and then bowing to me with something like condescension, seated himself on the opposite side of my table. His manner and features struck me at the first glance as those which I had somewhere known in years gone by, but which Time had half obliterated. His head being uncovered, his forehead shewed high and expansive; it was bald, and furrowed with strong lines of care and deeply-engraven sorrows. His face had the look of much thought, mixed with a mild melancholy; his eyes were half-sparkling, half-dimmed, as they had wept out their brightness in tears; and his

whole appearance that of a young man made early old by disappointment and despondency. Not to keep my attentive readers on the step of my story, when they should stand in the hall,—after some progressive conversation on the subjects of the day, which led in the end to many remarks from both sides on things not made for the day, but 'for all time,'—the immortal men and books of the 'o'er-passed age,'—a few short sentences of explanation discovered to me, under the disguise of a literary name, and the mutilating alterations of time and misfortune, my old warm-headed and warm-hearted schoolfellow, Jack Everard!

It is not the worst moment of our lives, when two schoolboy friends (grown older by the loss of the gentle and happy years of life, and colder by the loss of hair-brained haste and intemperate ardency) meet again, after long years of separation, no longer boys, but men: it is then that we most feel that we have been young, 'but now are old;' though we have perhaps husbanded enough warmth of heart in this wintry world to be glad and young again at our meeting, if we feel sad and old when it is over. In a moment we had both started up, and catching each other's hands, need I say that tears started in both our eyes? A motley host of mine came rushing down my cheeks, some of them running for joy, others for pity of my friend's condition; others for old schoolboy recollections, which now started up like dreamers that had been long asleep; and others for friendly and mingled feelings that cannot be classed or separated one from

another: whilst his ran over for the change he felt he had undergone from hopeful youth to hopeless manhood, as well as for the recollection of the friendship he had forgotten, but which he saw was as young as ever.

Everard was as much astonished to see me as I him: time had altered both of us, but how had the world altered him! He was the hope and pride of our school—the delight of all when present, and the sole topic of praise when absent; open-hearted to a fault—open-handed to poverty—kind to the unkind—piteous to those who deserved pity; loving all men as they were his brothers, and beloved by all as they were brothers to him. I knew not at the moment of our meeting whether he was altered in all of these things; but when I looked at him, I could see that time and change had robbed him of some of them. I was anxious to know his history; and again grasping his hand, with our old schoolboy warmth, "Frank," said he, "you are the same-hearted fellow as ever; but I have neither heart nor spirits now to tell you the perils of the road through which I have passed. I would rather forget them, and think them well-endured, that I have overtaken an old fellow-traveller who has luckily escaped them, and has gone on with a light heart, which makes the heels light to outrun many accidents that dog the heavy-hearted and heavy-heeled pilgrims. I am as glad to meet thee as I should be to meet my happy boyhood again, if I could again be a happy boy, and forget that I have been an unhappy man."

"Everard," I rejoined, "when I look at you, I fear

that you have indeed known many vicissitudes since last we met?"—I saw at a glance that I had unconsciously touched the tenderest string of the human heart,—that which vibrates to its own sorrows. His countenance changed, and his eyes dropped with downcast earnestness on the vessel he held in his hand. It was plain that I had given a turn to his thoughts which pained him; and I felt somewhat of regret as I beheld the waters of a wounded heart running over at his eyes, which he endeavoured, but in vain, to conceal. His hand trembled as he grasped the cup; he lifted it to his quivering lips, but drank not, and returned it to the table: again he raised it, but his hand still trembled, and he laid it down. I sat in silence. Words cannot console the heart in moments of agony like these: you might as well hope to silence the stir of troubled waters by plunging pebbles into them: the heart must administer its own cure, or die of its own disease. At length, after a painful abstraction of some minutes, casting his eyes on me, and then glancing them another way, as if conscious that he had let me too far into his feelings, I ventured again to address him.

"A man need not blush for any tears but those wrung from hearts he has wounded."

"Perhaps not," was his reply, as he wiped away those he would no longer strive to conceal.

"Nature, our bountiful mother, did not drop into our hearts those precious waters, drained from her own breast, (to be kept there like a little spring of freshness, to assuage the fever and thirst of the brain,) that

we should deny its waters of relief to ourselves or to others, and shut it from them like a sealed well. Though I should think the man weak who went whimpering about like a schoolboy, I should count that man wicked who had tears for no sorrow. He who can weep his own griefs, can (or I know not the human heart) feel for those of others."

"Not always," he replied: "you forget the selfish."

"Let us hope that these are few; and let them keep their tears as misers do their gold, to deny them, in the end, to themselves, and to stagnate in their hearts, till what was designed by Nature to refresh them shall prove the source of poison and pestilence!—But come—I'll hear thy story, Jack; or I shall imagine it worse than it is; and you shall behold me weeping woes which are but the tricks of a strong or a weak imagination. Here is the Burgundy, mine honest Jack of the olden days of youth; drink, till thy glass look pale at the pedestal; and tell us thy story as it were not thine; and yet let it be thine, or no man's. Drink, and let us forget the use of eyekerchiefs, and leave them to the waiter to wipe glasses instead of eyes!" Here he threw out one of his old laughing looks of pleasantry, which were wont to set the '*play-ground* in a roar,' and thus replied to my intreaty:—

"Well, Frank, since thou wilt have my story, make thy handkerchief thy nightcap, fold thine arms, and give thyself up to Morpheus and me. Thou knowest, then, mine old friend and schoolfellow, that I left ——— school on a truant expedition: I was fevered

with the thirst for fame and fiddlesticks; and having escaped from brow-beating and back-beating ushers, and birches hanging, like the sword of Damocles, by a single hair over my fated head and its antipodes; in the very corduroy trowsers of my boyhood, 'striped like a zebra, spotted like a pard,' with pen-wipings and pen-splashes, I travelled up to town, and commenced man of letters. Thou knowest, Frank, that I was profound in the Golden Primer, and deep in Dilworth; and with all these attainments at my fingers' ends, I offered myself to the first bookseller off the stones, at Mile-end, that I came to. I thought, in my simplicity, that every man who sold books of course had also his establishment of authors: I know not for which employment in literature I was then most fitted, but I should now think the dusty, for I could have dusted many a book which I could not then have read. I had ran the gauntlet of every bookshop, when at last I arrived with due steps at that mart of wit and words, Paternoster-row; where I continued my unliterary applications for literary employment, looking, at every door, to be employed either on epic or epigram—but with the old success. One eyed my jerkin, not quite so long as a man's, and not short enough for a boy's, and I believe took me for a genteel valet in search of business for his master; another recommended me to collate the various editions of Cock Robin; one looked on me as an idiot-boy; another told me to go to school again like a good boy, and he would write to my master to forgive my truantry. You

will easily conceive that this 'damped my intended wing;' at length, however, having inquired in due succession at every house down the Row, I came to the first Chapter in my history, the Chapter Coffee-house; where, being pretty well wearied with a twenty-mile run-away from the country, and a long suburban and town perambulation, I stepped in, and after looking about me at the gentlemen in black, and thinking every one of them looked like an usher, and trembling accordingly, I sat down in the waiter's box, among the clean knives and dirty dusters, finding it to be the only place unoccupied; from which sanctuary I was soon routed with all possible disrespect, and my business inquired. Presuming, however, on the plenitude of my purse, which yet contained some five or six shillings, with an assumed boldness very unusual to me, I ordered something substantial for supper, and a warm bed, as I was hungry and weary—both of which I had in due order; and in the morning, having slept a good sleep, and making a hearty breakfast of chocolate and five muffins, I learned, to my astonishment, that I had risen from my bed half-a-crown in debt over and above the crown in my purse.

"You may conceive that this shook my confidence in its very shoes!—you might have cooled an oven with me; I was all over in a cold sweat of terror at this unfortunate second error of a long series of after-errors. The waiter bullied, and then whispered the bar, which I thought was of course to fetch a constable; I saw the Dogberry of debt-offenders, and felt,

even then, the iron hand of the Law laying hold of me; but in the midst of my perturbations, a lucky thought suggested itself: I had a small gold watch in my pocket. Thou rememberest it, Frank, or shouldst remember it, for often did it save thy back, and the parts adjacent, from rod and rule, when thou wert too much taken with the antic Sport to hear the whispering monitor, Time, and the hour for returning to school; and it saved my body at this juncture from the iron house and hand of Confinement. I drew it forth: it was a family one,—the gift of my old maiden cousin, Dinah Singlebed, spinster, and so forth. I looked at it with a blush for the family honours, when I remembered that I was going to pawn it for a beggarly account of chocolate and muffins: but regret was in vain; so, with one sigh for my family honours, and another for myself, I gave it over in trust to the waiter, whose eyes glistened when he saw the impounded prize. He begged, in a whisper, that I would make no apology for the trifle I owed him,—I could call any time,—and if I did not, so much the better, I dare say, thought he. Civility, thought I, as I prepared to depart, is the characteristic of honest Thomas, the waiter,—whose hand, in the excess of my gratitude at having escaped the horrors of a gaol, I had grasped with a boy's warmth, and shook very sincerely. He bullied, to be sure, at first, thought I, but that was because he took me for some juvenile Jonathan Wild, or precocious Count Fathom; but what else but civility in excess could induce a gentle-

man in a black coat, white waistcoat, nankeen small clothes, and blue silk stockings, to undertake the care of my family honour and watch, valued at twenty guineas, for a beggarly arrear of some two shillings and sixpence. O happy puppyage! suspectless simplicity! wise ignorance!—would I not give my family honour and another gold watch, to be again as worldly-ignorant!—So, brushing down my jerkin as I went out, and opening the door before me, honest Thomas bowed me with many legs very politely out; and out I went, with Horace in one pocket, and nothing in the other—with many hopes in my head, but fears in my heart; and began *de novo* at the bookseller's next door, continuing my inquiries to the end, changing sides, and in and out and up again, a sort of literary dance—but still with the same result as the day before.

"It grew near the dining-hour of noon with unde-praved appetites: the cry of nature seemed more and more audible—I heard her voice rumbling awfully in the unbraced drum of my stomach:—Where was I to dine? Oh at the Chapter! he could not refuse: the watch was worth ten guineas to a Jew—I could not calculate how much it was worth to a Christian; so, to resolve my doubts, I boldly stepped into the Chapter, ordered a steak, and looked out for that politest and most friendly of men, honest Thomas. The steak was brought, and between the hungry mouthfuls I looked for my considerate friend; but another waiter waited on me now—and now another, and another still succeeded. I was half inclined to cry with Mac-

beth, I would 'see no more,' till I had seen the one I wanted to see; but I looked for him in vain. I felt sure of knowing him by the roguish, good-humoured twinkle of his eyes, and the limp of his left leg. I looked at all the legs in the room; but the legs I sought had walked away, or else one leg had been miraculously cured of limping since I had been there in the morning. I grew more and more uneasy; and every mouthful seemed as it would choke me. At last, to ease my doubts, I inquired where Thomas the waiter was? 'Oh! Thomas did you inquire for, Sir? He has been discharged for disrespect to the bar.' My heart jumped to my mouth, and the meditated mouthful I had transpierced with my fork, fell, meat and fork, into my plate. You might have bound me hand and foot with a thread of gossamer!—the truth struck me at once, that honest Thomas, and his roguish, twinkling eyes, had danced off to the tune of 'my gold watch.' What was I to do? Tears of terror, shame, and anger rolled down my seventeen years' green cheeks. To be brief, as I had dined with Trust, it was plain enough that I should sup with Sorrow. My young fears and feelings so overpowered me at this dilemma, that I blubbered outright; and in a moment the bar-maid, waiters, and the whole company present, which consisted mostly of gentlemen of the clerical cloth, were gathered round me. I sang my story with a pretty running accompaniment of sobs, sighs, and tears, that would have made a pleasant parody on Steibelt's Storm; and it was immediately seen, that

the motive for Thomas's sauciness was, that he might be discharged with some colour for carrying off my watch. However, the company sympathized so far in my distress, that they collected as much silver as might be translated into a guinea; and my family honour, with many awkward attempts at resisting so much kindness, pocketed the shillings of the kind creatures; my dinner, too, was forgiven me by the benevolence of the bar; and thus, what with the goodness of the Pulpit and the Bar, I was rich in pocket, though reduced in fob.

"This incident, perhaps, did me more good than harm, for it drew the attention of several of the company to what could be my business in town: they suspected me to be a truant, and tried to extract the secret; but I was true to myself. I confessed that, young as I was, I had come to town on literary enterprize; they smiled at me, but did not dissuade me from my madness: would that they had—it would have cured me, and sent me back to school again!—A timely laugh from men who had so lately shown such kindness for me could not have been mistaken by me; it could only have meant that discouraging censure which would have cured a rash, enthusiastic boy of his rage for adventure—and I might have been saved. But they only smiled; and my resolution was not to be shaken by a smile. My story got wind; and as my Horace lay on the table before me, one of the company took it up, and finding that I had some education, he offered to introduce me to a bookseller who

was about to publish a new translation of Horace, in which I might assist, as it was to be 'done into English by several hands.' I jumped at the proposal, and, having thanked my new friend, grew impatient to leave him, that I might have the opportunity of commencing before morning. I took a turn round St. Paul's, and at the same time turned the first ode in my head. It was 'done into English;' and on the following morning, I was introduced to Mr. Vamp, the bookseller, who consulted my friend, his literary clerk, on my maiden manuscript, and I was retained to *turn* Horace at five guineas a sheet. I could have hugged my new friend with joy; but I proposed supper that night, at the Chapter, as probably much more to his liking. He consented; and I took my departure, full of a thousand hopes, to the corner box on the right in the Row, and there translated and bit my nails, and bit my nails and translated till eight. At nine we supped; at ten I was a d——d good fellow; at eleven I was rather worse,—from wine, which was a new thing to my head, and began to turn any thing but Horace's odes, or if it had a lyrical turn, it was more Anacreontic than Horatian. But the Bar took compassion on my youth, conceiving that I was too tender to be a hardened offender; and I was taken away to bed in the custody of a rushlight, and slept myself sober for the first time in my life.

"In the morning I found I had to turn Horace all day, to pay the expences of the night before, or else Horace must turn out of the Chapter. To be brief,

this Horatian mode of life lasted two months, during which I netted thirty pounds literary profits, and was growing happy, proud, and forgetful of the future; but it came at last, and stood present, and I was as poor as ever. "My name," thought I, "is up for poetry; I have done Horace Flaccus to the satisfaction of the town—I will now try to do Horace Versatile as much justice." In a month I had a volume of sonnet, song, ode, elegy, and fragment, ready for the press; and Mr. Vamp undertook to publish it. I had a hundred subscribers, at half-a-guinea each; I spent them all in two months, and enquired after the profits of my book, which had been praised by the Reviews, and 'walked the town awhile,' as Milton says of his Tetrarchordon, 'numbering good intellects;' it did not sell—though it was hinted to me that he had a second edition, printed privately, which had sold almost as well as the first. But you know, Frank, I was never suspicious—conceiving that a dishonest man is his own gaoler. I gave up the profits, and turned my attention to the Tragic Muse: in two months I had written a tragedy, in another it was received, in another brought out, and in one night damned. Lord Fillagree had had his Comedy damned the week before by the democracy; his aristocratic blood was fired, and he procured two hundred bravoes to damn my plebeian piece, which they did most satisfactorily for his lordship; and I slunk to my attic with half-a-crown in that pocket which had been all day gaping for a hundred pounds. To disguise his cruelty, he sent me a letter of con-

dolence, and ten pounds, which I returned by the hands of my laundress, with a strict injunction, that she should deliver it into his lordship's hands, that he might behold how a poor plebeian despised patrician pride and meanness.

"But young and ardent natures are not to be thus damped: I determined again to write and present it to the other house; but fearing to venture on tragedy, 'seeing what I had seen,' I made my bow to smiling Comedy, wooed her like a lover, and won her presence. Where I dined I do not now recollect; but I supped, generally, at home, lest too much of my time should be taken from my comic loves. Ah! who but unfortunate authors can tell the miseries which damned authors endure! The pinchings of the inward man from hunger; the nippings of the outward man from cold and scanty covering! Yes, my friend, I wrote comedy in a back garret in St. Clement's, warming my winter-frozen fingers in hot water, with which I was occasionally supplied, through the humane attentions of a lady who took in washing in the front attic—'merely,' as she said, 'as an amateur in laundry, and to keep her hands in' hot water, I suppose, like myself. Her pride kept her chin above water—till at last she upset her tub, and set up her carriage; for she became mistress to the Lord Knows-who, for I forget his lordship's name, while mine was pillowed on the tenth wave of adversity, only to be soused over head and ears in it in a short time.

"I finished my comedy amidst the groans of my

own heart, for Poverty flew sharp-toothed upon me, and bit me to the bone. It was accepted, and read in the Green-room; the Manager, who wrote himself, suggesting many alterations, with which I was forced to comply, or else cut down my comedy to the every half-hour performances of a Bartholomew-fair puppet-show: for Mr. Manager modestly detested any thing that was not better than himself, and when it was only equal, he cut it down far below him. I altered it agreeably to his suggestions, and took out the comic from my comedy, leaving only enough of the original safely to secure the original title,—'Debts and Duns,' both of which I saw would follow its first night.

"The fatal day arrived; but there was nothing extraordinary observed in the heavens;—the sun got up, as usual in November, about twelve, and I, about the same time, shot through the stage-door 'swift as the sparkle of a glancing star.' My comedy was put off on account of the serious indisposition of a gentleman of the company, who had to deliver the prologue—no one but himself could, it seems, recite a petitionary prologue, and he could do nothing else. I was vexed, but could not bounce; I was too humbled by hunger, which is a great corrector and queller of the evil man. I uneasily affected an easy indifference, and walked my melancholy person out of the Green-room, exclaiming, as I went out, fuming like a Catholic censor, 'Debts and Duns!' A walk through the Park, however, cooled me so effectually, that my teeth chattered though they said nothing. Here I picked my teeth

for a luncheon; but in the midst of my dinnerless distress who should come up but Lord Fillagree's French valet, with a command from his lordship to read my comedy next morning at breakfast to his lordship. Necessity and time had smoothed down the austerity with which I had resented his lordship's former conduct; and I waited on him as I was commanded. We breakfasted together quite *en famille;* and with the last cup I commenced my reading, giving it as much dramatic humour as the sensitive state of my nerves would allow. I was, however, not a little astonished to observe, that, where the comic situations were, as I thought, irresistible, his lordship maintained the most impossible gravity; and, indeed, he never once laughed or smiled through the entire comedy, though its humour was, with all Mr. Manager's alterations, still irresistible, to my thinking, and its wit as brilliant as the diamond on his finger. His valet, however, laughed prodigiously, but still politely, and as it were 'with a difference;' sometimes, indeed, he laughed where the business was serious—at others, where the humour was apparent, he preserved his lordship's gravity. When I had concluded, his lordship stretched himself, and asked his valet how long I had been reading; he replied, with a shrug, 'Three hour, my lor'!' 'Three hours!' exclaimed his lordship, no doubt surprised at the power of wit, which could make time run away so inaudibly, thought I, hugging myself on my success; but I too soon discovered, when his lordship began to yawn, and not to praise, that his

surprise was at the length of his patience. He was leaving the room, when I respectfully requested his lordship's opinion. 'Oh! my opinion;' said he, endeavouring to recollect himself—'Oh, it is a very pretty sermon!' mistaking me for Dr. Orthodox, whom he had lately appointed his third chaplain; and left the room. I ventured to hint to his valet, with the utmost deference, that his lordship was not clear in his opinion. 'Oh! pardon me, sare,' interrupted his valet, indignantly—'my lor' is never wrong.' 'But it was a comedy, not a sermon,' I still suggested. 'De difference is not much; but if it had been a comedy, you would have hear his lordship's laugh, which is de politest in Europe, out of France: I perfect him in it after his travel, and Monsieur my lor' is not de dullest pupil. It is vera true, sare, you did not hear my lor' laugh, because I alway laugh for my lor' in the morning, when Mademoiselle, my sister, who favour his lordship, will quarrel with him last night; or when he has play and lose with Monsieur de Count my cousin: but I believe, sare, I did you de honneur to laugh alway in de right place? If not, it was for I cannot understand your Comédie Anglaise, which is, Monsieur—I forget your name—not Moliere and the Comédie Française, and never will. And now, sare, I have de honneur to wish you de beautiful morning.' And saying this, he bowed me with many genuflexions to the door; and I expected to hear the rascal bawl out that Mr. Horace Versatile's walking-stick stopped the way.

"This was encouragement, you will say; but I was not surprised, for I ought to have known Lord Fillagree's frivolous character better. The mystery was soon cleared up; for I learned, the next day, that his lordship was himself writing a second comedy; and there is nothing at which a man is so grave, except at his own funeral, as at the reading of a rival's production.

"The night at last arrived, full with my fate. The green baize drew up for the cocked-hatted Prologue, with his slouching, shuffling gait, and waiter's legs: one gentleman in the boxes clapped the first thought, which was not mine, but Ben Jonson's; and five or six hard-handed fellows, honest creditors of mine, who hoped that its success would be their success, led the applause. The prologue went off, as it came on, most lamely; the curtain drew up, and the comedy commenced, if comedy it might be called, in which what was comic had been lowered into seriousness, and what was serious had been heightened into something not quite comic, and yet not serious. Need I say, the audience yawned through it like an Amsterdam audience at an Italian Opera: however, it was not damned, for the partial hissing ceased when the snoring became general. It was enacted the next night to a full orchestra, and an empty pit and boxes, and then quietly dropped into the tomb of all the Capulets. I was crushed by this failure, and swore I would print it as it was originally written; but how? Mr. Vamp re-

fused it, the Row rejected it, and so I threw it behind the fire as a burnt-offering to Disappointment.

"To be brief, I gave up the Stage, as it was then conducted, as a vehicle in which a high-mettled racer for fame would not consent to run, and a moderate-mettled one must be cut and slashed to death. I turned my furrowing face, therefore, from the comic to the epic Muse. 'Lord Lovepraise,' recollected I, 'has patronized eight bad epics; I will seek his patronage, and be the ninth dull muse he has been Mecænas to.' You see, Frank, that my spirit of independence was already bent, if not broken: it was apparent to myself then, and it must be so to you now, that I cared not for his patronage, though I asked it, and that I should never have been grateful for it if I had won it; so soon does disappointment, falling on an ardent mind, cover, if not crush, all those finer feelings of our nature, honest pride and sudden-sensed shame. I was willing to wear the badge of patronage, though I felt it to be dishonourable. Yes, I stooped my spirit, and was patronised. Patronage was stamped on my brow like the brand-mark on the forehead of a slave; for patronage is not patronage now—it is corruption or nothing!—His lordship lent me the light of his countenance to my projected task in such a manner, that I saw it was not for the glory of literature that he gave it, but to add a feather to his own plume of pride, and be talked of as the patron of learning and letters. His way of rivetting the chain was hard, gross, public,

and ostentatious; and if ever I blushed in my life, it was at that moment when some men would have thought themselves honoured. But I went to my task with a better hope to encourage me,—that of immortality. I proceeded slowly, but, as I thought, successfully, in my 'great emprise,' suffering, however, want and misery by the way, which none would credit but those who have been equally devoted, and equally unsuccessful. His lordship's patronage was but a name; it flattered me with hopes which became in the end despair. I explained my poverty to his ear, and he listened to the broken balderdash of his French valet. I laid it before his eyes, and he sent me his new mistress's ill-spelt love-letters to him, and his well-spelt nonsense to her, to turn into verse; then my pride started in disgust and honest anger on its feet, threw off the trammels of his patronage, and I stood again upright,—a miserable man, but free.

"Think not, however, that I endured these 'slings and arrows' without being hurt in mind, body, and spirit. I found myself at the end of my sixth year of battling against Misfortune, a crippled and a changed man. My temper, which was mild and passionless, had taken an imperceptible turn; I was now gloomy, silent, and somewhat morose, with only occasional gleams of that smiling goodnature which made my boyhood pleasant to myself and to others: my melancholy took me from the busy world too often, 'the fields were now my study, and Nature' my sole companion. It is not good, however, for man to be alone;

he should have even a partner in his sorrows. This thought gnawed into my heart like a subtle worm. The melancholy which drove me from society, now turned round and hurried me back into it; but I was unfit for its intercourse, for I had grown too sensitive to be happy with most things. Unfortunate men have either no feelings, or the most acute and tender:—a word, or a look, which I did not understand, silenced my forced wit, and racked me with miseries. My heart became a prey to the cankering tooth of chagrin, and the sateless worm of melancholy gnawed into its very core.

"I flew again, like a free bird, or rather like 'the stricken deer,' to my old green world, the fields, where I wooed the Muse, and sometimes won her. But still I was unhappy, unfortunate, and alone. 'The birds sing,' said I, 'but they have their merry companions, and each one of them, one, above them all, whom Nature teaches them to think dearer than the rest. But have I? The answer struck upon my heart as his own voice must have sounded to the lone dweller of Fernandez' isle. I felt that some other voice than mine should then have spoken, but have answered, 'yes,' instead of 'no.'

"I then discerned, but too late perhaps, that my errors were the weeds of a wild imagination. I rushed, therefore, from the idle bower of the Muse, and came at last on the busy quay of Commerce. I had lost the strength, the breath, and the heart of my youth, in chacing a bubble; it broke, and I was disappointed.

To be brief, I procured a minor situation in a merchant's service, where, though I have nothing to hope for, and nothing to be satisfied with, I am once more in the world, though not with a young or a whole heart for it. No—I will no more trust myself on the Goodwin-sands of Chance, where a vessel of my freightage is more likely to sink than sail. I have put my pen in a proper inkstand; have left my epic in its cradle, to be dandled when it's father's arms are stronger to nurse it; have thrown off the crown of patronage as a golden thrall that bowed down my head to the dust; and though the wounds I have suffered are so far healed that only the scars remain, yet I feel like a mariner who has saved himself, but lost all he had adventured, from a shipwrecking sea, though I now lie harboured in a stormless haven. I shall never get the din of its waves, or the terror of the tempest from my memory, though I have learned to look with dull-eyed patience at the past and present, and, if I may, to hope in the future to re-find the happiness which I have lost, and one which I shall lose only with life itself."

Here his familiar history ended; but I must finish it for the satisfaction of my readers. These sober resolutions of my unfortunate friend did not last; the Muse is like a mistress whom we have dearly loved—we may swear to forget her, but it is a disappointed lover's oath, and forgotten with some new remembrance of her. The love of fame, however it may be crossed, and the hope of it prevented, in some breasts, cannot

die but with him who bears the consuming flame. He, soon after this, left the shores of Commerce for the fields of Poesy—took up his epic lyre, swept it with a desperate, yet despairing hand—sought once more to win the ear of the reluctant multitude, who heard his song as 'the idle winds,' which they regarded not—fell again into wretchedness and want—sickened, and died of a broken heart.

TURNSTILE HALL;

A SKETCH.

EVERY nation under the sun has its characters; but none of them are so rich in humour, so truly home-born and home-bred as those of England. All Europe, doubtless, has its lords and gentlemen; and they are either proud, presumptuous, arrogant, oppressive, idle, extravagant, or effeminate, as too many lords are, and have been, from Noah's flood to the last Lord Mayor's feast,—but England alone can boast of the only true country squires in the world, and the only specimens of that gentleman whom I shall call the domestic knight, in contradistinction to the chivalrous knight of old. This abundant isle abounds, too, in many other rich characters, which are 'native, and to the manner born,' and of which no other land can produce even a specimen;—such as the domestic woman, or lady housewife,—a busy-body who hath, or thinks she hath, the hundred eyes of Argus, for she looks through the hundred rooms of a huge, old family-house, from attic to pantry, from pigeon-loft to wine-cellar; and nothing escapes her careful ken, as Molly my mother's house-

maid-in-chief could testify, and honest, hobbling, corn-toed old Jonathan Snacks, my grandfather's butler of fifty years standing and going, could, if it were needful, well verify.

But waiving all dallying with delay, I shall at once run up the stone steps which lead to the hospitable oaken-doors of Turnstile Hall, and passing through them, introduce my friends at once to the *dramatis personæ* of that little theatre of human actions, human passions, and human natures. Happily for us, we have arrived at the Hall in that nick of time which is very poetically called 'pudding-time;' for see, in the side-parlour there is now laid out a luncheon such as our forefathers so considered, when ladies had already taken a beef-steak for breakfast, and gentlemen ate more for a snack than now serves for a surfeit. Luckily, too, round the white-diapered board sit the very beings whom I most love in life; and to whom, so free and easy are all things at Turnstile Hall, I can with very little ceremony introduce you.

First and foremost, then, at the eastern angle of that old-fashioned, square, oaken table, which has dined three centuries of my ancestors, sits Sir Vane Vagary, the undisputed lord of this ilk, and the hero and first figure of my farrago. It is that old gentleman, whose cold beef seems to be swimming in the hottest Durham mustard, which partly accounts for his excessive choler; and he is, as you may see, a hearty, plethoric, red-faced, silvery-bearded, flaxen-wigged, obstinate-

headed, restless-brained, warm-hearted, vagarious old gentleman of some seventy years or so; but not at all infirm, as his voice would tell your ears if ever they should meet with the misfortune to hear his stentorian tantivies; or his foot would convince any part of you which you might prefer, if he caught you clambering over his pales in the park, which he considers a trespass, though you might enter in at all the gates, at any hour, free of foot, and free of blame. His principal pursuits will best relate the rest of his character: these are, fox and hare hunting, ducking, driving, angling, trolling, strolling, snaring, swearing, (oaths exclamatory and affidavitory,—for he is a magistrate,) horse-riding, horse-whipping (mares, colts, stallions, grooms, boys, and others,) horse-buying, horse-selling, groom-hiring with a character, groom-discharging with a character, maid-meddling, maid-mauling, butler-bullying, much drinking, and little thinking, though he professes to think a great deal upon points of philosophy, and has for twenty years been employed upon a work 'on progressive motion,' which is to immortalize him, when it is finished, though as he has not yet advanced through a quire of foolscap in his progress, it is not expected to be published till Time and Fame are both too old to read it, even with spectacles. These make up the usual list of his employments, which are, however, pretty thickly interspersed with others too numerous to relate, which serve to keep him ever active, ever varying, and never the same, except in the fixed good qualities of his heart, which neither

time nor distraction seem capable of changing, so continually warm and truly affectionate it ever has been, and ever is.

By the side of him sits, as you may see, a very portly, good-looking, sanguine-hued dame, whom, by the keys hanging at her apron-string, you may know to be first in command of corner cupboards, conserve-closets, chests of drawers, tea-caddies, sugar-canisters, cordial-waters, &c. &c. That goodly lady, Heaven bless her for the condescension! is my much-honoured Mamma. She is a true huswife of the old school; Mistress-paramount of the maids, Countess of conserves, Princess of puddingeers, Ruler of the roast and the boiled, and Queen of householdry. She is absolute in her rule; and it is treason to dispute her sovereign sway. Sir Vane himself being, as she says, no better than a bad, wild widower, with no notions of management about him, she is, by her own election and sovereign will, lady of the ascendant in Turnstile Hall, and nothing is but as she orders it: not even the obstinate old Knight himself dares gainsay her commands, or stand defyingly astride in the peremptory path of her privilege. The valiant old boy once indeed braved the war, but gave up the unequal contest, after an unsuccessful siege of three months, during which he lost ground daily, having been beaten from every position, till he had but a corner-cupboard left which she had not taken; when, seeing the hopelessness of any further resistance, he very prudently surrendered the keys of the domestic citadels which had

escaped her capture, though she had cut off all communication with the citadels themselves; and madam my mother took a formal possession, after the preliminaries of a treaty of peace were begun, but never concluded, if I may judge from the eternal squabbling which there is daily between the high contracting powers about the articles.

Next to that maternal lady sits my worthy papa, a very thin, sleek, meek, mild-looking gentleman, who eats little, and says less. He is, you may perceive, getting on fast for the elderly side of fifty,—that time of life when, if a man has lived ever so turbulently in this noisy, ever-stirring world, he begins to listen to the persuasions of peace, and to value her blessings; and determines, if possible, to live serenely, and walk smoothly and softly down that hill of life, whose base is in the valley of death. Not that ever that mild man stirred much in the world, or mingled in its many frays: no, it was enough for him to hear the din at a distance, and to peep 'through the loop-holes of retreat' at the turmoiling stir beyond; and if he escaped the din of my mother's domestic clatter, and could get out of the whirlwind she blew wherever she visited, 'happy man was his dole,' and he wished no more than thus ever to be blest. His serene meditations on Nothing, over his pipe of canaster,—(for he, with the Knight, was of that old school of gentlemen who could see nothing vulgar in an enjoyment which the brave, philosophic, and refined Raleigh introduced to England,)—and his calm enjoyment of a glass of lively

currant, or harmless gooseberry, (for he abhorred fiercer or more subtle wines,) were the sole employment of his days; and nothing disturbed his nights, that I ever heard him complain of, unless it were the domestic dreams of my mother, who, even in her sleep, was still engaged in ordering all things aright, with the same watchfulness she exerted during the day. Sometimes in her visions she would scream deplorably at the breaking of an imaginary china-dish by 'that careless creature, Betty,' or charitably scold the female cook for a wilful waste of dripping, 'which the poor, God help them! would have been glad of,'—for she was benevolent even in her dreams; and though she seemed harsh and hasty in her waking hours, yet was she full of tender mercies for poverty, and ever ready of pardon for the worst of offenders. These are among the worst troubles which trouble him, good easy man; and my gentle father never but once showed angry with his wife, and then he called her, in the height of his paroxysm, 'Mrs. *Patience* Vagary,' with much emphasis; and but once with his children, and that was when he threw his glove at me, upon detecting me impaling cock-chaffers with a corking-pin,—a cruelty which that slight reprehension awed me from ever after repeating, for how could I be unmerciful to others when he had been so merciful to me?

Over against Mr. Clement Vagary sits Mr. Welladvise, the incumbent of that pretty, pastoral, ivy-hidden church which, as an Irishman would say, you may see out of the bow-window: the Knight, who loves a joke

however untrue or inapplicable it may be, calls him the perpetual incumbrance of that church; and the worthy minister modestly answers, 'Yes, thanks to the good Knight, he cannot deny but he has become so.' He is a protegé of Sir Vane's, who found him in a neighbouring village, a poor curate of sixty pounds a year, with six children; and finding him also to be a man of an excellent life, a benevolent spirit, much solid learning, and wishing for more of that literary ease which is necessary to the development of great talents, he insisted, not long you may imagine, that he should accept the rectorship of Woodvale church, which was in the Knight's gift; and as he patronized him solely because he should have a better opportunity of pursuing his studies, he, very inconsistently with that motive, keeps him continually about him,—at table, in his library, and indeed every where but in his stable, or in the chase. Mr. Welladvise he considers to be his ghostly counsellor; and the good man performs his office wisely and well: he is a moral check upon the Knight's exuberances, whether profane or pleasant. It is indeed a sight worth seeing, to behold the boisterous, rampant, and untameable spirit of Sir Vane soften down to seriousness and meekness under his gentle hand; and become as tractable, listening, and attentive to his admonishments, as an obedient child under the governance of its parent: it is the young lamb taming the old lion. The weight of the worthy gentleman's advice cannot be withstood, because he is known to practice more than he preaches;

and he is therefore hearkened to by all, and is considered a jewel in the crown of religion, and a grace to goodness, gentleness, and all the kindly virtues.

Opposite to him sits a person, who is indeed very opposite to him: he is Sir Sampson Satinhair,—that soft-looking gentleman, whose shining locks are parted up the front Wesley-wise, and fall sleekly on either side to his shoulders: you may smell him at this distance, as he seems even now to be dying 'of a rose in aromatic pain,' and perfume puffs about him at every shake of that white length of lawn which his scarcely less snowy hand holds, and half seems to drop. He is an exceedingly pragmatical, priggish sort of person. Lord of a neighbouring manor, and passing rich with five thousand a year, he is nevertheless a compound of meanness, niggardliness, and covetousness, and will be any body's butt for a dinner that shall save the expenses of his own table. He is a beau-bachelor, as you may discern in the excessive nicety of his person; and Miss Readylove, with whom he is an undeniable favourite, says he is 'a particularly nice man.' This gentleman, through the ministry of my mother, is as regular at the breakfast, luncheon, dinner, tea, supper, and whist tables, of Turnstile Hall, as the egg-cups, tray, salts, sugar-basin, snuffers, and knave of diamonds. The Knight tolerates him only because Mrs. Patience would otherwise make the Hall intolerable to Sir Vane if he discountenanced his visitations.

To speak truly, he is, indeed, a great favourite with the ladies. Fifteen years ago he was the butterfly of

a few summers in London; and he is still a beau of the first brilliancy at ——— in Warwickshire. His taste is thought to be infallible in all matters of bon ton, virtù, dress, or ceremony. The country beauties consult him, and his decision is an irrevocable law, because he still spends, at the least, six months, and perhaps at the most sixty pounds, a year in town, when he returns back 'Sir Oracle,' and no dog, below the condition of a lady's lap-dog, is allowed to bark when he speaks.

The design of his eye at Turnstile Hall is bent on Miss Penelope Readylove, my mother's niece—a young lady who is rapidly growing ancient: she has, however, happily for her, a prettier fortune than person, and it is astonishing how handsome it makes her in Sir Sampson's eyes, who affects to sigh at her so vehemently, as Sir Vane once humourously remarked, "that there is no keeping the candles in at supper time." That is the lady—she who sits face to face, and, no doubt, if you were to investigate, toe to toe, with the sleek-haired Knight, making little Penelopes in his eyes, as he is miniature Sir Sampsons in her's. The roses, you will observe, are blown and scattered from her cheeks; and that is but a stray leaf which has lodged I shall not say where. Her tresses,—I suppose they may be called her's since she has paid for them,—cluster thickly, for Time has ceased to thin them. 'Her teeth,' sometimes sings the soft Knight, 'are as white as the new-shorn flock,' at least those are which are not her's, for there are I believe two or three black

sheep among the number. But enough of Miss Penelope, who, after all, is quite as fit for her lover as her lover for her.

And now turn your eyes on that fair young creature,—Maria, my sweet sister; and that modest, humble youth who sits beside her, drinking the music of her voice with greedy ear, and feeding on her smiles with hungry, devouring eyes,—him there with the high, broad forehead, and those dark intellectual lights, which burn under it like two bright stars under the brow of a white cloud,—that is Francis Ardent, a lover as you may swear, by those intelligent glances on her who sits so near him; and a man of real genius, as you may surmise from the modest diffidence with which he dissents from Sir Sampson's puppyish pragmatism. But Frank is unfortunate in his love, for my irrevocable mother has lately told him, without mincing the matter, that he never can have Maria till his fortunes are mended; and hot-headed, hasty Sir Vane has also, with his strange mixture of determined earnestness and relaxing goodnature, threatened to blow out his brains if ever he attempt any thing in furtherance of his aims which can be considered clandestine.

Frank, indeed, is still a welcome visitor at the Hall, notwithstanding the wakeful distrust with which my over-vigilant mother watches him. To do the opposing parties justice, however, I do verily believe that they rely greatly upon his honour, and still more upon the strict sense of duty which Maria has ever shown to

her parental governors. Doubtless, the penalties would be heavy, if she should break from the trammel-strings of her mother's apron; and might amount to a total loss of fifty thousand pounds, which is her fortune when she can be equally matched; with the still heavier loss of parental love, name, kindred, and home. But Frank loves her too thoroughly to let her risk any of these happy things for his sake; and he therefore bears his wasting passion as patiently as he may, and thinks himself too happy in being trusted so near to his heart's treasure, though he cannot entertain a hope of ever possessing it. Maria, who knows the depths of his heart, is not indifferent to its happiness; but girl as she is, she is prudent enough to check her love for him, because she sees the determination of those who hold her future fortunes, reputation, and happiness in their hands too strongly manifested, to doubt their sincerity.

It seems that an alliance with the young Lord Gayville, the heir of the richest estate in Warwickshire, is the *Ultima Thule* of Sir Vane and my mother's ambition; and this high aim is the only thing in which they have never yet differed, or in which, as the Knight expresses it, they have run currically paired and parallel. As for Mr. Clement Vagary, my ever-patient papa, he interferes not either on the right side, or the left; yet I have reasons for believing that he wishes well to Frank, and that he would rather see his dear girl happy with the husband of her own choice, than unhappy with the husband of her mother's; but he dares not testify in

his favour, or Turnstile Hall, huge as it is, would be too small to contain Mrs. Patience Vagary. Poor Ardent, therefore, suffers the anguish of his heart to waste the sap of youth, and wears the pale, thin cheek of hopeless resignation, loving his disease too well to perform that self-cure which some strong minds have effected when similarly diseased, and prefering, like the passion-pained Nightingale, wilfully to press his breast upon the thorn which has wounded and must destroy him.

It was never surmised, till lately, what was the real nature of his malady: he had borne his passion for Maria silently and without betraying it, through two long previous years; for so fearful was he of the hopelessness of it, that not even to *her* had he dared confess the secret of his soul; nor could I, his most inseparable companion, and his only confidant, ever come at the cause of his melancholy, and the loss of his old cheerfulness. I had conjectured that it was his fortuneless state of circumstances, his parentless destitution, and above all the obloquy which the hard, unreasonable world attaches to the condition of his birth;—for it was about this time generally given out, and he took no measures to deny it, that he was the illegitimate son of the late Lord Gayville, who dying suddenly and unmarried, the estates devolved to his nephew, then a youth of about eighteen; and no legal provision being made for Frank, he became all at once dependant on the bounty of the young Lord's guardians, who confined their liberality to the paltry payment of

two hundred pounds a-year, till Lord Gayville should arrive of age, when he was to do whatever his own generosity suggested as needful and proper.

With this poor stipend, Frank entered college; and there kept his terms with great credit to himself, winning the hearts of all in authority over him, and making his equals his fast friends and affectionate admirers. These scanty means, however, whilst they kept him poor also kept him proud, for his spirit of independence; which was ever strong within him, always seemed to increase with those wants which are diminishments with weaker spirits. To have offered him any pecuniary assistance, however delicately, would have been the greatest unkindness you could have done him; for it would at once have reminded him of his necessities, and wounded him with the keen sense of the mortifications to which they subjected him. Not that he was ungrateful in refusing those proffered services, or insensible to the motives by which they were dictated, but his spirit could not brook the offer. Poor Ardent, how often have I pitied thee, but dared not seem to do so! How many, too, would have stretched out their hands to help thee, but that they knew thou wouldest shrink even from their gentle touch—and they dared not hurt thee.

These were the circumstances which were supposed to be the cause of poor Frank's pale looks and melancholy sighs; but Mrs. Patience Vagary, who had a wiser eye in these matters, saw at once, from a few glances, that far different causes had produced these

effects; and taking Ardent one day into the library with her, taxed him directly with the fact; and he, after a little hesitation, confessed the sickness of his soul, and received a great many axioms of good counsel, but not one word of comfort. And now every body was made acquainted with Frank's story, and every body wondered that they had not discovered the secret before, except Sir Vane, who, with many significant winks, wished to appropriate the merit of this discovery from my mother; but it was universally voted that the Knight, for all his affected knowingness upon the subject, knew in fact nothing more of it than he had just been informed of. As for the gentle Maria, she first blushed, and then hanging her head like a lily, turned pale as one; but, after shedding some few natural tears, revived again, and looked, as she well might do, proud of her lover.

But to return to the mutton, as the French say. Gentle companion of my visit to Turnstile Hall, two other, but inferior, characters who serve to make populous the widest parlour within it, are, as you may behold, honest Jonathan Snacks, the butler, who has served, 'man and boy,' as he transposedly expresses himself, 'fifty-five years, come next Candlemas;' during which term he has, by his faithful conduct, gradually promoted himself from the nothing-considered, kicked and cuffed scullion-boy, to the respected rank of butler, a distinguished office with perquisites; which he has filled (as well as many hundreds of decanters and hungry stomachs) without one stain on the

white table-cloth of his reputation, or even so much as an insinuation to the contrary, either in chamber or hall, kitchen or scullery. Though the continual weathercock of Sir Vane's vagaries, who sometimes blows him fifty ways in fifty minutes, he never yet, as the Knight handsomely acknowledges, 'turned rusty,' or murmured at his unreasonability, or disputed one of his whims; for gentle Jonathan always said, in apology for the Knight's head, that he knew his heart to be sound as the best bottle in his bin, aye, and as generous too. He has lived long enough with the old humourist to know him to a hair, and love him with that fine old domestic affection which was once so commonly entertained, because encouraged, by long-retained servitors for their good old masters—but which is now every day becoming more scarce and impossible, because masters are no longer what they used to be.

The next person in relative consideration to old Snacks, is young Joe, his graceless nephew; who is, as it were, the active heels of his uncle, which are dispatched hither and thither on those nimble errands which the stiff, old, shuffling limbs, that once were as stirring at the ring of a bell or the tap of a knife on a plate as the best, cannot now move to do. Joe is his uncle's youth returned—a reminiscence of his nimble nonage,—promising a butler in the bud, who will jump, with his consent, into his shoes, when he has 'shuffled off this mortal coil' and his list slippers toge-

ther, and perpetuate the butlery fame of the Snackses to the third and fourth generation.

Joe is much patronized by the old Knight, who pats his head in the parlour, and kicks his tail out of the stable in the same hour, as something that has no business there; which produces an equal amount of pain to his *postilions*—as Joe himself calls them—and silver to his pockets. Joe boasts among the grooms, that he understands the whole grade of the Knight's horsewhipping, from the cut savage to the cut sportful; and that he can distinguish blindfold, merely by the touch of the application, the Knight's best silver-handled whip from his second-best horn-handled one. Joe is very much winked at by all the family as a 'deep young dog;' and, indeed, the stable-boys go so far as to insinuate that, when he wants to attend a fair or a wrestling-match, he purposely provokes the Knight to use his horsewhip, and walks off perfectly satisfied with the atoning guinea in his pocket: while the same suspectful persons insinuate also, that Joe is particularly calculative in the selection of the whip to be used on these occasions, and that he always puts the thickest and the longest handy to the Knight's fist, reckoning, as it is said he does, that, the greater the damage done, the greater will be the cost of the repairs.

I have now, gentle visitor, introduced you to the most prominent personages of Turnstile Hall. There are, besides, as you perceive, a dozen or more persons,

but as they are only accidental visitors, and are of the rabid genus, called sportsmen, the likeness is alike in all; and I need not, therefore, say more of them, than that they are, what it is their aim to be, 'd—d jolly, roistering, ranting, roaring, rattling fellows,' whose business it is to follow a puss or a pretty girl with the same sentiment, and to run both of them down, whenever they can, with similar *sang froid*. As for their dogs, which are now resting or wrangling in all corners of the parlour, being equally welcome to the Knight as their masters, for their qualities, I refer you to their pedigrees, which are as ancient and honourable as their esquirely masters, and infinitely more esteemed.

TALKERS.

THERE are as many varieties of Talkers as there are of tulips: to classify them would require the nice discernment and patient perseverance of an ethical Linnæus; and when done, it would be an useless classification, unless, indeed, Taste could be brought to have a love for the cultivation of them, with an ulterior view to the improvement of the several classes, by marrying a common female scold of the last class with a refined male babbler of the first; and thus effect by artificial means what Wisdom, with all her old endeavours, could never work by any means,—an improvement of Talkers generally.

There is, however, a pleasure in holding up a few of the first classes of Talkers to notice, similar to that, perhaps, which a tulip-fancier feels, when he displays to the wondering eyes of one not in the fancy, (who had perceived, on being shown a bed of them, that they were all tulips, but did not discern the nicer streaks of difference between them,)

'Some faultless *tulip* which the *Dutch* ne'er saw.'

The most common class of talkers is composed of Babblers. There are several varieties of these; but

the most disagreeable is the Long-tongued Babbler. One of them is sufficient to set a whole village at war, or disturb the peace and sacredness of virtuous privacy. Rather than be silent, he will wound his dearest friend with a tongue, which, like Laertes' foil, poisons where it touches—and even him who uses it. From this sort of talker you learn the origin of Miss A.'s finery, and Miss B.'s *faux pas*; the rise of Mr. C.'s wealth, and the state of Mr. D.'s embarrassment, &c.

If you have doubts of the character of Browne, he hesitates a fault—hems—hints at a second—hems again, and out comes a third. If you think well of White, he damns him with 'faint praise,'—recollects to have heard something whispered not entirely redounding to his honour;—not that he believes it—idle rumours are not gospel truths: and then he tells you what Thompson thought, but never said, and what Dixon said, but never thought, of poor W. He publishes a mischievous piece of truth or scandal (either answers the purpose of the day) in the morning, and follows the sound of his own rumour as a wether-mutton follows his own bell. Gifted with the interfering spirit of Marplot, he gets the wages of Marall for his labours,—cuffs and contempt. The Babbler is commonly an unhappy person, for he has meddled too much with the happiness of others to be happy himself; and having made it the sole business of his life to betray some hurtful truth, or harmless ill of all, no one thinks it absolutely necessary to speak well of him, either in epitaph or elegy.

Another variety is the Dull or Harmless Babbler. This is a talker in his turn and out of his turn—in season and out of season; and yet has nothing to communicate. Yes—you may learn from him that it rained yesterday; and that it is not impossible that it may rain to-day. He is Francis Moore's counter-prophet: the one foretells when showers will fall—the other registers their descent.

The next in succession are the Small-talkers. These are tea-table appendages, who sometimes hang by the sinister bend of ladies' elbows; and are usually 'prim, puss-gentlemen,' all prettiness and pettiness. Ceaseless tonguers of 'words of no tone,' they lisp, or cultivate some delicate mispronunciation of one of the four-and-twenty letters, or of a few well-selected syllables. They have a chicken's perseverance in picking up the smallest grain or chaff of tea-table intelligence, and are not greedy in keeping it to themselves:—no,—you may have their second-hand nothings at less than they cost. Their intelligence is as a stewed frog in an Ontario of broth—as one dew-drop in the desert of Arabia,—or as an inaccessible island in a sea of three months' sail;—you may steer round it, and by it, and never touch the land: it is a *Thule* beyond the *Ultima Thule* of mental navigation, and lies beyond the reach of any intellectual Cook or Vancouver: you think you descry it in the offing, and tacking, hope to drift on its shore; but when you really see it under your bow, you may coast round it, and cast out your grapple-anchor to hold-to, but you should as soon tie up your

horse with a sun-beam, or get a will-o'-the-wisp to light you like a well-bred link-boy to your lodgings, as make ground there. The light of their minds need not be hidden under a bushel; a pill-box would be a dome of 'ample space and verge enough' for it: like one 'good deed in a naughty world,' it might shine therein, and then not gild its confines. Their most delicate, prim mouths are like perfumers' shops, and breathe nothing but 'sweets.' Their talk is redolent of essence of tyre, bloom of Ninon, violet washes, pomade divine, and a hundred other essences. They 'die of a rose in aromatic' anguish, and are recovered by lavender-water and other 'soft appliances' fifty times in an evening in their over-exquisite moods.

The third are Talkers of the objective class. Be your opinions what they may, however undeniable, correct, settled, or well-digested, they can object to them. They can find flaws in diamond-wit of the first water; motes in the brightest rays of the mind; and beams in the eyes of Truth. I know such an one. If you would take out of his mouth an advantage which he is gaining in argument, throw down a bad pun as burglars toss a bribe of meat to a house-dog who is getting the vantage-ground of them, and he will instantly drop the argument (as that fabulous dog dropped his substantial meat in the river for its duplicate shadow) to tear the poor pun to pieces, analyzing *nothing* till he proves it is *something*; and when he has satisfied himself that a bad joke is not a good

one, he is, from mere politeness, obliged to laugh, however reluctantly.

The fourth is the contradictory class. Let your opinions to-day be to the letter what their's were yesterday, and they instantly run an opposition-coach against you, upset you on the mudbank of their own opinions, and leave you sprawling and bespattered, to get up as you can. When you have run them to a stand on one point, and they find you are agreeing with them, and they cannot object to the matter of your opinions, they have still a resource left in objecting to the manner. You speak unaffectedly, and they censure you for mediocrity, plainness, and want of spirit: you talk on stilts, to be on a level with them, and then you presume too much for so young a man, of so few opinions. You speak with slowness and distinctness, and they dislike a drawling speaker: they would as lief be tied to a 'lover's lute,' or 'a Lincolnshire drone:' you speak high and quick, and your voice is shrill as a cricket's, and there is no following it, like a grasshopper's. You modestly betray that you are well-read in the classics, and they accuse you of pedantry: you conceal your reading, and they suspect you know very little either of books or men. You bring them old opinions, and they doubt whether you have any of your own: you deal in new ones, and they object to them as untrue, yet adopt them as sound, and put them forth, where they are safe from detection, as their own. In short, you strive in vain to agree with

men who will not, or cannot, agree with themselves; and you have a good-natured talker's reward for your pains—words.

A specimen of the fifth class is the Talker in admirations. His conversation (if such it may be called) is all exclamation, like a German drama; and is made up of such jargonisms as Good-God! God bless me! Is it possible! Who would have thought it! You astonish me! Very shocking! Very pleasant, &c. &c.

The sixth are the interrogative class. Their talk is all question: one might think that their tongues were shaped like an interrogation. You feel in conversing with one of these like a catechized charity-boy, when he is asked what his godfather promised *not* to do for him. Talk for an hour with one of these, and you will only hear from him such interrogatory affirmations as these:—'And so Jones is well?—and Johnson's married?—and you really prefer Pope to Pomfret?—and you seriously deny that Cobbett is the author of 'Junius?'—and affirm that Dr. Watts did *not* write 'Fly not Yet?'

The seventh and most insufferable class are the exclusive Talkers. One of these will undertake to talk for all the persons present. If you impatiently throw in a word, it is like flinging a stone into a current; it disturbs and cannot impede it, but rather impels it still faster onwards: or it is like striking a spark into a barrel of gunpowder—a fresh explosion of words spreads a hubbub and confusion all around. Though he tells you every thing you already know, you cannot

tell him any thing that he does not know. He can tell you what a new book contains that is to come out next Tuesday, as well if he was himself Wednesday; or anticipate the merits of a great picture on the easel. If you mean to see the new tragedy, he has seen it, and he destroys all the delight you anticipated in its newness, by repeating its best points, and unravelling its plot. If you set out with an anecdote, he snatches it out of your mouth, as a covetous dog would a desired bone from his best companion and dearest puppy-friend, and tells it for you: you object that your's was a different version of the same story, and gently persist in telling it your own way; he knows the other version as well as you do, and re-relates it for you, but thinks his own way preferable: if you persist, after all, in telling it for yourself, he will insinuate to-morrow that you are in your *anecdotage;* and declare that you are the worst teller of a good thing since Goldsmith. Indeed, you cannot do a more impolitic thing than start an anecdote in his hearing, for that one is too certain of reminding him of a hundred others; and the last one of that first century of good things is so nearly related to the first of the second century, that he cannot choose but relate it, and you dare not choose but hear it. If you commence a favourite quotation, he takes up the second line, goes on with it, and ends by quoting twice as much as you intended: this invariably leads him to recollect another poem by the same author, which no doubt you have heard, but which somebody else, who is present, would perhaps like to hear; and

then he begins it without further prelude, and you may if you please go to sleep *ad interim*, if you have no fear of his reproach for want of taste before your eyes to keep them open. You have been to Paris, and he informs you of your expenses on the road; or you are going to Scotland, and he narrates most pathetically the miseries of a German inn. Of all talkers these are the most insufferable.

The seventh class are the Exaggerators,—not your professional, but amateur fibbers. These are a pleasant set of talkers enough, only you must not take them too literally. It is a humour that even witty persons cannot always appreciate: to your thoroughly sensible and one-and-one-make-two sort of minds 'it is a stumbling-block and a reproach.' It is, perhaps, as to its conversational value, mere nonsense: it is what an ingenious punster (fracturing a French word in pieces) considers *bad-in-age*, and not tolerable in youth. But, most sensible reader, shut not thine ears wholly against it: if thou wouldst enjoy Sense at any time, listen sometimes to his less capable brother, Nonsense. After the mind has been wearied by abstruse studies, worldly cares, imaginary ills, or positive griefs, is not nonsense like letting a long-strained bow relax; or giving slackness to a lute-string? Nonsense is to sense like shade unto light, making by contrast what is beautiful still more beautiful:—it is like an intended discord in a delicious melody, making the next concord the sweeter: like silent sleep after sorrowful wakefulness; the calm which succeeds a storm:

like cheerfulness after care; condescension after hauteur: like the freedom of night-gown and slippers after tight boots and bursting buttons; or a night of dancing after a month of gout: like that delicious giggle some schoolboy gives way to when some hush-compelling Busby turns his back; or the laugh politeness has suppressed till one has shut the door on a puppy or pedant: and it is like an olive to the palate of a wine-bibber, sickly in itself, but giving a *gusto* to the old port of the mind, or to the brisk, bubbling champagne-wine of wit.—One of the most delightful of exaggerators is ***** ****: it is, perhaps, the pleasantest ingredient in his lighter writings; and in his more serious ones, is only a more serious twanging of the same string. This is sometimes mistaken for mere affectation, but it is merely a vivid magnifying of minor objects into an exaggerated importance, by exhibiting them through a kind of mental microscope. This humour, too, is the peculiar charm of his table-talk, and makes it very sprightly and sparkling: give him an idea which is stretchable into exaggeration, and he will extenuate it into the most ludicrous elongations and monstrous distortions, resembling those long faces we have seen thrown out by magic lanterns. Dean Swift was, perhaps, the greatest master in this kind of talking and writing.

There are several other classes, which I shall notice in brief. The slow Talkers, as tedious as the *te deum;* the quick Talkers, sudden as a postman's knock, and not always as full of information; the loud Talkers, to

a nervous man, as agreeable as the din of a dustman's bell, or a death-knell in November; and the Talkers about taste, whose language is of no country, but is a jargon of all countries, and consists of parrot-like repetitions of *virtù*, *gusto*, *tout-ensemble*, *contour*, *chiaro-scuro*, Titianesque bits of colour, Turnerian crispness and clearness, Claudean mellowness, Tintoretto touches, &c. &c., affected term on term, to the degrading of Taste into a chaotic cant of words.

ITALIAN BROTHERS;

A TALE.

Giulio and Paulo were brothers of the princely house of Lamberti, which had, for many centuries, been the pride of the ancient and stately city of Mantua. Godefrei, their father, married, in his youth, the fair Juliet di Arezzo, a lady of noble family and of great personal beauty, who was not long allowed by the will of Heaven to bless his bed. At the close of the first year of their union,—which might be so styled, for they were one by love as well as by the marriage-tie,—she died in giving life to these twin-brothers, born on the same day, though Giulio became, by a few hours more of life, the elder, and consequently heir of the honours and large possessions of his ancient house—enriching things, of which he was not long the heir-apparent only, but heir-possessive; for, in a year after the death of their lady mother, Godefrei fell suddenly dead whilst gazing on her picture, in the chamber which she had most loved to retire into for religious meditation, and the musings of her own happy heart. This apartment had been closed and darkened, by his command, from the day of her decease, till that which was the day of his; and the sad anniversary of her's; and it was natu-

rally inferred, that the sight of that pictured remembrance of her whom he had loved from childhood, struck too sudden an agony on his heart, and caused his death upon the instant.

The orphan boys, who were beautiful as sinless infancy ever is, had been sustained from the bosom of Maudetta Monti, the widow of the Prince's secretary; a woman secretly attached to Godefrei, though self-assured of her hopeless passion, as it was known that he had plighted his faith with the lady he afterwards wedded. About twelve months, however, before the marriage of Lord Godefrei, she had so far lessened the force of her unavailing love, that, attending to the generous persuasions of the Prince, she consented to listen to the suit of Orlando Monti, the preceptor, and afterwards secretary and friend of his excellent lord; and at length gave her hand to him, and was happy in a humbler love than she had once aspired to. Eight months, however, after her union, her husband fell sick of a fever which had infected him whilst visiting a lazaretto, with the alms of his charitable lord, and died in a few days, leaving his wife womb-burdened with an infant, which was born about the end of the same month in which Orlando died; and immediately baptised by the name of his father. Her confinement happening but shortly before that of the lady Juliet, to her, therefore, the two princely boys were intrusted; and too happy was she, that she had this opportunity of showing the love she once entertained for the father, by cherishing, even with a parent's fondness, the chil-

dren of his union with another. The three boys grew and throve in her bosom, whose milky fountains, like the widow's cruse of sacred history, was, by the bountiful providence of nature, made inexhaustible; and it was a beautiful sight to see her clasping with either arm a boy at each breast, while one lay in her lap sleeping.

At the decease of Lord Godefrei, upon examining his papers, it was discovered, that, by an anticipation almost providential, as if he had heard a voice in his own heart that informed him he was not long to survive, he had made a will, in which Maudetta Monti was created executrix and sole guardian of his boys, during their minority;—apportioning the sum of four thousand florins a year for the support of herself and the three children; and commanding his own sons to look upon her as their mother as long as she lived, and upon Orlando as little less than their brother. To his sons, when of age, he left it to provide for her future wants, as well as for the promotion in life of the young Orlando; and in leaving these just considerations to their own hearts, as his will expressed it, he knew that he addressed himself to sons of the noble house of the Lamberti, ever famous for their munificence, who needed not his dying instructions in what manner they were to act when they were to be both grateful and generous.

Under the authority of this testament, therefore, the widow removed to the palace of the Lamberti; entering it with the two young lords, Giulio and Paulo,

nestling in her breast, whilst the little Orlando was borne in the arms of an attendant after her. There were no rejoicings, for the deep regret which the retainers of the late prince felt for his loss forbade it; though this ceremony was necessarily gone through as a formal investiture of the estates in the two infant heirs; every one testifying their acknowledgment, through her, of their allegiance to the young princes. Thus fixed in her office as guardian of the orphan lords, she dedicated all her time and thoughts to her tender charge; and the three boys grew fast in all the strength and comeliness of childhood. Maudetta's foster sons, by those actions which are the expressions Nature teaches her children to use till they have learned the less expressive language of words, already loved her as their mother; and though raised from a comparatively humble station, to be the guardian of two noble boys, and the steward for them of more wealth than would purchase all the usurious coffers of Italy, she never, in word or act, forgot her former simplicity of manners, and general kindness even for those unworthy of her thoughts. For there were, indeed, some who were not wanting in wickedness, to throw enticements in her path; and who were base enough to prompt her even to a dishonest use of her power: but she repulsed their dark incitements with disdain, which deterred the serpents of her Eden from again tempting her. Some, too, of the poorer nobles of Mantua, seeing her person still fair and beautiful, and knowing that she was of gentle blood, though of a

poor family, sought her hand, hoping thus to obtain an influence over the two young Lamberti; but she was aware of their true designs, and determined to refrain from all ties but those which bound her to her children; and so kept on in the direct path of her duty, despite of all the temptations which induced her to turn from it.

In the meantime, the two noble boys grew up the promising scions of the ancient family-tree, while her own Orlando was even not less her pride; for whether it was from his native nobility of soul, or from his being fostered with his princely bosom-brothers, he already showed a beauty of person and a superiority in mind, that made some who did not know them mistake Orlando for Paulo, the younger Lamberti, who very early betrayed a froward and sullen severity of temper with those he could command, which pained all who loved him to witness. Orlando, too generous to enjoy and feel flattered by these mistakes, which disparaged Paulo to his own ears, would blush and set the strangers right, with a modesty which only served to confirm the impression in his favour, and excite a disappointment, that he was not so nobly born as his gentleness and nobility of look made him appear to be. Orlando, who was too early wise not to perceive the effect these disparagements had on the moody spirit of Paulo, redoubled his attentions, and, if possible, his affection for him; and notwithstanding he too painfully saw that his affection was despised, and his kindness rejected, still, by his invincible good-na-

ture, he subdued him into a short-lived regard for him: For a time, Paulo would forget his animosity, and be a pleasant playfellow with his young rival and gentle brother; but the very tilting of a rush would in a moment chafe him into the fury of a caged tiger goaded by innocent wantonness into ferocity. Giulio, who could not behold this unworthiness of temper without pain, would counsel him to restrain it; and Orlando as earnestly strove to soothe him, but in vain,—for the scornful boy would shake off his gentle hand from his shoulder, as if it had been something venomous. Then would Orlando the more strenuously, and with all the eloquence of a generous nature, endeavour to convince him how much he loved him; and would humble himself so much to pacify his high temper, that Giulio forbade him by such means to soothe his scorn; and tearing Orlando away, reproached his brother with being unworthy of so much affection as Orlando in all things entertained for him. The scornful boy would then mutter some moody threat, and shunning his companions for the day, feed his sullen heart with the scorpions of anger and revenge, till the mild interference of their foster-mother made up the breach. She had too long observed this growing mischief with a pained heart, and took the wisest precautions to prevent its increase. Thinking that it perhaps arose out of that pride of the nobly born scorning to make common affection with those beneath them, she humbled her son so far, as to dress him in clothes of a meaner quality, and which made a

more palpable distinction between him and his foster-brothers. The humble Orlando consented willingly to this, thinking it a sacrifice that might soothe the irritable pride of Paulo; but Giulio, who immediately observed the change, and saw into its kind intention, now more than ever reproached his scornful brother, and bade him blush at seeing himself supposed capable of demanding such a humiliation. Paulo smiled at these reproaches, with an evident exultation at the homage which was paid to his pride, and then left them for his usual moody loneliness; whilst the two friends, after vainly regretting his increasing estrangement from them, went to follow their own pleasures, and endeavoured to forget him.

Giulio and Orlando were, indeed, brothers in minds, manners, tastes, and affections, though nature had not made them more related. They were now in their eighteenth year, which in the fast-ripening land of Italy, moulds the limbs and form of youth into an early manhood. Giulio was graceful in person, and looking in all things as noble as he was in rank; while his dispositions were gentle, frank, and affectionate to all: he was intellectual above his years; bountiful as his means; and merciful as he was generous. Orlando was, in all save birth, similar in all qualities; and when they were met together in the public walks of Mantua, those who knew the parity of their qualities and the disparity of their fortunes, would say, "There *should be* the Lords Lamberti." Orlando would sometimes blush at hearing these public encomiums; whilst

Giulio, who did not love Paulo less for these indirect disparagements, felt a friend's pride in his friend, though humbled in thus hearing abroad how little his brother was esteemed. Paulo now, however, instead of occasionally quarelling with, and occasionally forgiving, those who had never injured him, kept aloof from them entirely, either shunning the two friends, if they accidentally met, or listening to their ardent assurances of unaltered affection with a scornful smile, without deigning either to accept or reject their proffered loves. It was now too plain that to attempt the removal of his antipathy was hopeless; and he was reluctantly left wholly to himself.

Two years having passed away, in the pursuit of studies, young accomplishments, and innocent pleasures, Lord Giulio now approached the term prescribed in his father's will, for the full inheritance of the estates of the family. The day having arrived, great and splendid were the rejoicings which welcomed in the reign of another good and generous lord of the ancient house of the Lamberti. The servants, tenantry, and dependants heralded in the morning with a serenade under his chamber-windows; and about noon, the nobility and gentlemen of Mantua arrived, to pay their congratulations. As it was the fashion in those more natural days, to consider the morning as a part of the day which occurred some time before noon, even nobles could then eat a dinner at mid-day. A sumptuous banquet was therefore served up in the massiest and most elaborate dishes of gold; to which

were added the rarest wines, served in cups of gold, flaskets of exquisitely-painted glass, and bowls of agate, emerald, and chrysolite, all equally graced and ornamented with devices designed by the most eminent hands of the old masters of Florence. To these succeeded fruits, the ripest of all-fruitful Italy; to make all these sweeter, music, and bright-eyed ladies, the fairest of Mantua; and to render the occasion intellectual, the most celebrated *improvvisatori* of the day poured out their fluent feelings in canzonets, sonnets, and tales of love and chivalry. Wit and converse flew about, and all was life, mirth, and happiness.

In the evening, masques, and the peculiar dances of Italy, the sprightly coranto, and graceful galliard; and recitations by an Improvvisatore, whom Ariosto himself might have delighted to hear; with the hum of lutes in every gallant lover's hand; merry mandolines to time the dancers' steps; and soft-toned flutes accompanying ladies' voices, and puzzling the distant hearer, to say which was the human tone, which the instrumental, and which the sweetest,—so much did they seem one, and so mellifluously did the young beauties warble, as they rested in little clusters, with their gallants, upon the grass among the green alleys, and bowers of the gardens,—gave a voice, a grace, and an enchantment to all around. In other spots, stately dames might be seen treading graceful measures with their gallants; whilst other dames and cavaliers lolled on the grass, which in that warm country, even in the coolness of midnight, it is but a pleasant refreshment,

to lie upon. The gardens were glowing with a million sparkling lamps of all colours, looking like gems hung up in the prodigality of wealth, to sparkle a light as beautiful as the light of day. In the midst of all these gay and graceful persons, Giulio and Orlando shone out from the throng like two inhabitants of a happier and fairer world, come thither to make mankind happy by the example of their happiness. The highest-minded men of Mantua paid homage to their virtues, and wisdom above their years; and the fairest of Mantua's ladies showed, in the admiration of their eyes, what their hearts thought of their personal merits. Paulo, too, came among the happy ones, but it was to scowl upon those who did homage to his brother and Orlando; and as it was his humour, at other times, to shun those who sought to be intimate with him, he was now shunned in his turn. He loitered not long, therefore, among the revellers, but sought the sullen silence of his own chamber, and communion with his own dark and unhappy thoughts. Among the most light-hearted and light-footed of the revellers, might be seen Orlando's glad mother, reaping the happiness she had sown, in the congratulations and praises of all who surrounded her. Her solemn engagement being ended, and her charge completed, she was now freed from more than a mother's cares,—a guardian's anxiety.

The day being proudly celebrated, and pleasantly concluded, on the morrow, the will of Lord Godefrei was again opened before the friends of the young no-

blemen; and the extent of their fortunes disclosed to them, which exceeded their utmost expectations. The whole wealth, whether in money, houses, lands, gold, or jewels, was found to be divided between the two brothers, in the proportion of two-thirds to Giulio, being the elder-born, and a third to Paulo, that he might not feel himself in the condition of a dependant younger brother; and both were charged, according to their portions, to provide for their foster-mother and her son, whom they were also enjoined to consider not less dear than a brother and mother to them. This division gave satisfaction to all but the moody and covetous Paulo: a frown, when he heard the extent of his fortune, bent down his brows, till his dark, scowling eyes, could scarcely be seen beneath them; and his lips compressed together sullenly and scornfully. Giulio, who watched his face,—for he too well knew that it was a mental disc, whose shadows told his thoughts as truly as the dial the hour,—seeing his dissatisfaction, rose from his seat, and taking him warmly by his cold, reluctant hand, said to him, "My dear brother, to show you that my share of love for you is still greater than my apportioned share of the wealth of our good father, I will here, in despite of this document, make over to you half of all that belongs to the name of Lamberti; and shall be content with my diminished portion, if it returns to me a brother's love, and still rich enough to take the fortunes of our dear foster-mother, and my beloved friend, wholly under my care. Does this content you, Paulo?" A burst

of commendation and applause from the numerous friends of the house, at the generosity of Giulio, was only restrained by the intense suspense with which they waited for Paulo's reply. Answer, however, gave he none; but with a half sullen and half satisfied smile, putting his brother's hand away from him, walked slowly and silently out of the chamber, the company rising as he went out, from an impulse like indignation at his unnatural conduct. Orlando, who had purposely absented himself from the chamber on this occasion, that his presence might not gall the eye of Paulo, now entered the room. He had heard in an ante-chamber all that had passed, but expressed no surprise, for it was what he had expected: from delicacy, however, he advanced not to Giulio to comfort him, but kept in the background, until Giulio's eye at length met his, when the young lord rose, and hastening towards him, before all present, gave him a fourth of his fortune for his and his mother's lives.

Among the fairer part of the brilliant company who witnessed the brotherly affection and anguish, the generosity and true greatness of Giulio, there was one who felt all the alternations of grief for his grief, of admiration for what was admirable in his conduct, and participation of heart in all he said and did. It was the beautiful Bianca, the orphan daughter of an old Italian Count and soldier, who had fallen in the Guelphine wars; and was now, with her sister, the fair Alba, under the severe guardianship of their uncle, the Count Montagni, who, upon this tie of relation-

ship, presumed to be even more rigorous than their lamented parents. Having retired from the intrigues of Courts, it was now his relaxation to keep a strict eye upon these fair creatures, and play the spy upon their intimacies: his hope in all this being, by his intrigues, to exalt them still higher in that rank in life, which their beauty, accomplishments, and gentle blood deserved.

These two fair creatures formed the two brightest stars of the entertainment, and won the admiration of all eyes wherever they moved: but from Giulio and Orlando, who, by a happy chance, were their partners in the dance, they won more,—the admiration of the heart; for they were no sooner beheld by those twin-hearted friends, than a twin-love was born, which though yet in its infancy, the lovers and the loved both hoped might grow into maturity. The wary Count saw, with serene satisfaction, the attentions of the rich Lord Giulio to Bianca; but when he beheld the poor Orlando conquered and conquering the fair Alba, he stroked his beard, and looked contemplative. There seemed, to any eye that could read that intelligible book, the human countenance, a discussion therein between his thoughts, of how entirely politic it might be to remove all stumbling blocks out of the way of Lord Giulio, and how far it was practicable to throw one in the lover's primrose-path of Orlando. Then, on the contrary, for a while he seemed to doubt whether it was possible, seeing the unity which existed between the two friends, to prevent Orlando's success without defeating Giulio's—which, as the young lord

had fortune enough to make any ten nobles of Mantua rich, and to create his friend in gold a lord though not in blood, was a thing to be thought of, and not to be thought of. He very wisely surmised, therefore, that it was safe to patronise Lord Giulio's passion, and it might not be unsafe to see how much might be made of not opposing Orlando's.

So innocent and worldly unwise a thing is love, that the very means which it takes to conceal itself betrays it. The lady Bianca, therefore, though she participated more than all present in the joys and sorrows of Lord Giulio, might have seemed, to an eye unskilled in these tender matters, to feel less than any one. But her tears for his brotherly sorrow fell nevertheless, though secretly; her resentment of his injuries made her colour come and go; and the warm glow of her admiration for his boundless generosity, gratitude, and friendship, cherished the seeds of love which lay germinating within, into those beautiful flowers which feed the breath of affection with fragrance, and make it so sweet, that it is the only thing which smells of heaven upon earth. It was that delicate fear, which love alone feels, that kept the gentle Bianca and her sister distant from the numerous assembly, and fixed them in a remote part of the chamber, where they sat with fluttering hearts, like two fair doves, safe, but still fearing to mingle with the lordly eagles. Alba, indeed, when she heard the munificent gift which Giulio made to Orlando, dreading, as she did, that the poor estate of her love-elect would stand

between her happiness and his, had well-nigh fainted, and betrayed those emotions of her heart which she hardly wished to conceal, and yet feared should be discovered. But Lord Giulio, having now recovered himself, looked round among his friends, where smiles and admiration met him in every face. One face which he paused to look upon, bent down in blushes, when his eye was on it: it was Bianca's. He had not known of her presence in the chamber till that moment; but, with a lover's eagerness, he advanced to where she was retiredly seated, with her sister and the old Count, who was exercising his usual vigilance of eye and ear, and calculating the working of events, and the relative value of things. Giulio bowed to him with that precise inflexion of back, which he knew the old courtier looked upon as the true line of graceful gentility; and taking Orlando's hand in his, entreated the Count, with great emphasis, to accept him as Lord Giulio's dearest friend. Orlando was consequently received with much well-bred graciousness; and joy at the event glistened in his eyes, and in those of his hoping, fearing, and trembling Alba. The pure young hearts which were made for each other were not long apart; for each lover now leading forth his lady, the lively dance and light feast were indulged in as merrily as on the day before, till Pleasure had had her fill, and left the hall and bower of revelry to the stilly influences of rest and slumber.

But we must now return to Lord Paulo.—Suddenly possessed of a wealth which made him one of the richest

noblemen in Mantua, his mind, which had so long brooded in distempered darkness, burst out for awhile into a more animated sunshine—and discarded the cobweb hangings of gloom for the flaunting hues and fluttering tassels and tapestry of gaiety. Lord of himself, and freed in a moment from all the trammels of restraint, which the want of means for licentious liberty had so long kept upon him, he ran in loose riot after such pleasures as only libertines esteem to be such, and too soon and certainly discover to be pains. His first step was to remove himself quite away from the palace of his fathers, to a theatre better suited for the wild scenes he felt inclined to act. Those who still loved him would fain have deterred him from this first false step out of the right path of reputation: but he heard their advice as though he heard it not; and taking a palace in the most dissipated part of the city, he soon became the sun and centre of attraction with the worst and vilest of Mantua. The gamester, who had neither wealth nor honour to stake or lose, resorted there, to win from those who had both: the prodigal and ruined heir, who had squandered his patrimony, came there to crush him who was a thorn of remembrance in his heart to the same ruin: the flatterer, with his lip-language, which passes for so much, and means so little; the bravo, with the assassin's dagger; the riotous, the voluptuary, and every one who taught an old vice to perfection, or promised to excel in a new one, were all and always welcome. Among other visitors, too, there were not wanting the secret emissa-

ries of Count Montagni, with whom the avarice for wealth, and the desire for family distinction were the alpha and omega of all he had learned in life; and who could not yet give up a design he entertained, of throwing Lady Alba into the arms of Lord Paulo, as a richer and nobler husband than the plebeian Orlando. To unite her with one whose fortune was now even greater than Lord Giulio's, since his large generosity had lessened it, was a game worth venturing, even if he finally failed. Sometimes, therefore, the old courtier himself ventured to Lord Paulo's palace, which shook with the riotous shouts of revelry; though his pedantic sense of etiquette, more than his moral feelings, was soon sufficiently shocked by the licentious doings there. But neither the intrigues of his confederates, nor the plain proffers of the Count himself, had any effect upon Paulo, to move him to the desired end, till it was hinted to him that the Count would no longer oppose Orlando in his pretensions.

Until that moment, Paulo had never considered how fatally he could thwart Orlando in his passion: but to blast him in his most vital and dear design was now easy; and he already seemed in imagination to pounce on his intended victim, as the savage vulture drops on the harmless lamb. He now, therefore, entreated to be introduced to the 'white beauty,' as she was called among her dark countrywomen; and the next day was fixed for the interview. In the meantime he had to study the honourable lover's part,—for he meant no more than to play it for his savage sport; and this, as

he could be smooth as the serpent when he wished to seem so, and had eyes as dazzling and deluding and a spirit as daring, he had not long to learn—for the Devil's college never yet had a dull scholar on its foundation. The Count departed, and the appointed morning came; and Lord Paulo, attended by a splendid retinue, paid the promised visit to the Montagni palace, where he was led at once into the presence of the Lady Alba. Her cheek changed whiter than was its wonted beauty at his coming, and she would have sank on the floor; but at that moment the doors opened, and Giulio, Orlando, and the Lady Bianca entered, to the entire confusion and chagrin of the old Count, who had contrived, as he thought, to get rid of them, upon a falconing expedition, that the ground might be clear for the war which Lord Paulo was to wage: Orlando had, however, been informed of the intended attack, and thus opportunely returned, if possible, to frustrate it.

The meeting of the rivals was haughty and desperate on the one side, and humble yet determined on the other: they exchanged no words, but looks passed which were even more full of import. Giulio, however, who viewed his brother's base conduct in the light it merited, boldly reproached him with his design; and knowing that any brotherly tenderness he might testify for him, at that moment, would be like throwing oil upon fire, with the hope that it might extinguish its dreadful power, forgot at once that tie which he had too long remembered, and bade him either desist from

a design which must degrade him and the house of his fathers, who were never yet mean, crafty, or dishonourable—or go on, and dare his vengeance: a threat which blanched over Paulo's brow with the hue of fear, for he well knew his brother's courage and his own want of it. The Count would have interfered, but, caught in his own toils, his resolution to do a politic but base action seemed to faint; and he suffered his ally to stand on the bad eminence he had lured him to, without one effort in his favour. Lord Paulo, therefore, departed as hastily as he came; and Orlando, though happy in his defeat, felt a touch of sorrow for his shame, and, like a generous rival, would have followed to soothe his disappointment—but Giulio, who saw his gentle intention, held him to the spot, and forbade him to leave the apartment. Meantime, the Lady Alba hung weeping about her sister's neck; and the Count, not having recovered himself to pride and authority, left the lovers to themselves.

Paulo having returned home, where his companion-revellers anxiously waited to hear of his success, a hundred swords were immediately proffered in his service, though never intended to be drawn: there was one, however, who wore a dagger, but spake not, because he was willing to use it. Paulo knew this, and the dark thought blackened over his brow: he was yet, however, too young in guilt to resolve upon so diabolical a deed; but it might be thought upon, if more bold-faced means should fail. In the meanwhile he would try other ways which might attain the

same end with less hazard. It was possible yet to defeat the happiness of Orlando; and the Count he doubted not would be a willing agent. He went, therefore, to his wily work immediately; and his designs were as instantly listened to.

Orlando parted that night from his mistress with reluctance, and the Lady Alba retired with a heavy heart to her chamber, which was in the opposite wing of the palace to her sister's. She had not long been at rest, however, when she was forcibly awakened by her stern uncle, who commanded her to follow him into the next room. She dressed herself, and fearfully she obeyed him; but what was her surprise and terror, to behold Lord Paulo and two ruffians with the Count in the next chamber. Her terrors were soon confirmed—for she was abruptly told, that she must either consent to receive him as her husband, or prepare instantly to leave the palace for a distant part of the country. She replied with firmness, "Never!" and then demanded to know whither she was to be taken; and was answered, it was enough for her to know that she would be safe, and that her uncle would be with her, as well as Lord Paulo. Alba saw at once their design, and falling on her knees in vain entreaties that they would spare her, swooned, as if death had succoured her in her hour of misery. She was thus conveyed, in the arms of the Count, softly and stealthily down the stairs, through a door not often opened, which led to the most lonely part of the palace-gardens, where horses stood in waiting; and being placed in the arms of Paulo, who was

already on horseback, the whole party rode by a bye-way which led to the convent of St. Ursula, in an unfrequented valley more than twenty leagues distant.

Meantime, Orlando, having stretched himself upon his pallet, vainly essayed to sleep;—dreams, half waking and half slumbering, startled his heart so violently, that he arose from an unrefreshing rest, as the grey, serene light which ushers in the morning glimmered feebly in the east. He opened his lattice, to listen to the last notes of the lingering Nightingale, ere, wearied with her sad vigil, she sought her nest; and to drink the cool air, made sweet by the incense of opening roses and honeysuckles which had clambered there. But these delights had now lost their charm: his heart listened for another voice; and snatching up his lute, he hastened to the window of the lady Alba, to wake her, as was the custom of the gallants of that romantic country, with a morning song of salutation. His voice, which was plaintive and passionate, threw out the wild, impatient song of adoration; but the ear that was wont to recognise its earliest notes, listened not now. He tried a louder strain: but still the accustomed lattice opened not; and no finger tapped against the glass, to bid him be patient but a moment. "Surely she is not in her chamber, or perhaps—O Holy Mary! forbid that it should be so!" he exclaimed, with agitation, as he flung away his lute, and rushed breathlessly round to the hall-door of the palace. He knocked long and loudly; and heard at length the sluggish, slow step of the porter. The door began to grate on its hinges; and

ere it was half opened, he darted past him without a word, and flying up the stairs that led to the Lady Alba's chamber, struck impatiently the hilt of his rapier against her door, calling on her to answer: but no voice replied. He now, more boldly than was his wont, touched the latchet of the door, which flying open, he rushed in, and saw that she had slept in the chamber—but, from its present disturbed state, found the worst he could fear too truly confirmed; for, on a table by the window, she had laid an open book, in which she had written on the margin, "I am forced from home in the dead of night—Pursue and revenge me, you that love and pity the unfortunate Alba!"

The porter had by this time mounted the stairs, to see what the young lover could possibly want in his lady's chamber at that early hour; but, as he lazily approached the door, Orlando came rushing out, pale with agitation, and a hundred dreadful forebodings. He paused but a moment in his headlong speed, to acquaint him that the Lady Alba had been carried off by villains. Before the alarmed porter could well awaken the servants of Count Montagni, Orlando and Giulio were mounted on their swift-footed roans, followed by four armed grooms and twenty falconers likewise armed, and well mounted; and ere many minutes, they were gone, and could not be seen for the dust which had clouded up behind them. For three nights and days they traversed the country through, with no more rest than they took in their stirrups. But all their diligent seeking was in vain;—the Count and

Paulo had taken a route which few beside thought passable, and so escaped all eyes and all pursuers.

On the fourth day, Giulio and Orlando returned, worn out with the fatigue and anxiety they had endured—Orlando, indeed, was so weak and feeble, that he could not dismount from his steed, but being lifted from his saddle, fell like one palsied into the arms of his attendants, and was so carried to his chamber. Here he remained for a month, when his suppressed grief and sullen silence broke suddenly into a loud groan and some few relieving tears, at the touching, by Bianca's hand, of his favourite lute, to an air which he had been used to hear the Lady Alba play. And now he spoke again, but still feebly, and incoherently, as if his reason was shaken; and he seemed but indistinctly to recollect even those who most loved him.

In the meantime, no tidings were heard of Lady Alba: the Count and Lord Paulo had returned to Mantua alone, and it was believed that they had made away with the two ruffians who went with them, that they might not reveal the secret of Alba's place of confinement. Giulio, ere they had well thrown off their riding-dresses, was a frowning visitor at the Montagni palace: Orlando, too, weak as he was, could only be restrained by force from rushing out of his sick-chamber with his naked sword, ready to retrieve his loss, or revenge it. No threats, however, that Giulio could use, nor the proud challenge which he threw with his glove at the feet of Montagni, could stir him to resent his insults, or give him the knowledge which he sought,

of Alba's safety. He, therefore, appealed at once to the laws; and summoned the Count before the tribunal of justice. There, too, he evaded all inquiry; for by a wily show of necessity for what he had done, that he might save the honour of his family from a low alliance, and by fair assurances to the judges of the perfect safety of the Lady Alba, they dismissed the accusation, and Paulo and Montagni triumphed.

Orlando was now informed, that he might cease to hope for the hand he was ambitious to make his own, for he would never see the Lady Alba more, save as the wife of Lord Paulo, which was the price of her freedom. Thus defied, Giulio dared not draw on his brother, for a brother's blood was yet dear to him; and he was besides bound, under the pain of forfeiture of country, to preserve the peace with Count Montagni. Orlando also was not suffered to stir in revenge, for his strength had totally forsaken him: his mind, too, was scarcely less feeble than his body; and thus his enemies' machinations entirely succeeded.

Month succeeded month; summer had declined into winter, and the winter was almost passed away, and no breath of information was yet heard of the stolen Alba, although strict search and inquiry had been made after her through most of the religious houses in Italy. Orlando, unceasingly attended to, had now in some measure recovered his strength; but his mind's vigour seemed for ever gone. A melancholy without words, and a sorrow without tears, spread their dark clouds over all his days, and sapped his heart till

it was a ruin. He shunned the world, for he had lost his hope in it. Giulio, his tender mother, and the gentle Bianca, were the only beings he would converse with; but if even these tried to cheer him with lively thoughts, which they rather forced than felt, his mind turned from them, and sank into a deeper abstraction and a sadder melancholy than ever; and they, therefore, wisely and mercifully desisted. It was now perceived by his watchful friends that the shaft had struck too deeply to be extracted, unless that hand which alone could cure it was applied to the wound. The only voice which seemed to rouse him from his dumb despair, was sad and solemn-breathing music. To this he would listen, till his eyes rained tears which seemed like drops from his heart, become pale and colourless with destroying melancholy. The passion, however, which had made him a miserable man, made him renowned: in a few months all Italy had discerned and admired his genius—and Mantua saw in him her own Petrarch, as constant a lover, and as true a patriot. Melancholy, the last disease of disappointed passion, had made the muse a ministrant of ease to his soul: it was an inward voice, which uttered the feelings of his heart when his tongue was sorrow-stifled. With his pen he still conversed with his beloved mistress, though he knew not whether she was of earth or of heaven; and thus he invoked her:—

"Immortal spirit of her who in me bred
A deathless love—if thou dost mortally live
Out of thine own heaven, some knowledge give
Of where thou art, that I may soon be fed

With sight of thee; and be thine eyes' light shed
On Night's deep-darkening sky—and leave it there,
Like a blest star, to lead me through the air,
As those wise Easterns old to Bethlehem were led!—
Do this, if thou dost live;—but if thy breath
Is breathed, guide my weak steps to thy young grave,
That I may mourn on it, and madly rave
Till loathed life is lost in longed-for death!—
Hear me—and some way answer me—Oh hover,
Living or dead, about thy dying lover!"

It may be well surmised how two years of mental winter would take the rose from the tree of life, and blast the summer of the kindliest youth. It was too plainly seen that Orlando's energies were palsied, and that his struggles to over-master despair grew fainter and feebler. But at last a ray of hope suddenly lit up his mind; this was, to wander in search of his beloved Alba, in the garb of a poor Palmer travelling to the Holy City. His very heart stirred again at this thought, and his strength revived. He had planned to take his departure in two days; and on the evening preceding, lay stretched at the foot of that old tree where he had so often sat with his adored lady, looking where day last lingered upon earth—but now employed in thoughts of his journey, and in hopes of his success, when suddenly he observed another shadow than his own reflected in the waters of the lake over which he was leaning, as he lay at the mossy foot of that tall tree; and looking up, it was Lord Paulo. Orlando started to his feet, as strongly as he might.

"You are well met, Monsieur Melancholy," said Paulo, with an irritable smile.

"If you have met me a foe, to part a friend, why then well met indeed: or if you are come to do right to him whom you have wronged, then, too, we are well met. If not, 'twere better you pass on, and leave me to my meditations," replied Orlando.

"I come to pay no right where I have done no wrong," interrupted Paulo sternly.

"How!" demanded Orlando, "No wrong? Then never right was wronged. Why then came you hither?"

"To tell you what I never yet have told you, but yet you might have guessed—that I hate you!" answered Paulo.

"I never thought you loved me, though I have loved you much, my lord, and even now——"

"You have robbed me of a brother's love!" abruptly interrupted Paulo. "Like a cuckoo, you have been reared in my nest, to turn me out of it."

"Your tongue," returned Orlando, patiently, "is ruder than your heart."

"My tongue is the true interpreter of my heart; and he who says it is not, lies—you hear me, sir,—lies!" retorted Paulo.

Orlando started at this reiterated insult; and indignation rushed to his sickly cheek, as he counselled him to beware of using such language. "I am not prone to quarrel," said he; "but do not trust too much on this; men have been known to loathe what they most loved, though 'tis my affection to love all things that live——"

"And mine to hate a creature called Orlando," an-

swered Paulo. "All men and things have their antipathies; and this is mine.——Didst think I came to flatter, minion? No, I came here to tell you, one of us must die, that he who outlives the strife may live in peace!—What! not moved yet? Why dost thou wear a sword, if nothing can insult thee?"

Orlando at these words, replied, "My Lord, repeat not these disparagements, or, by my soul——"

"What, am I threatened by my brother's page?" cried Paulo. "That rouses ye, then, sir—and lest your chafed blood should pacify to peace, take this first blow of many I intend to bestow on you, to keep it angry!" And saying this, he struck at him with his right hand, and drawing his rapier—"Take your ground, sir, for I will have your life!" cried Paulo. His intention seemed, indeed, no less; for he rushed upon him, ere his sword was half unscabbarded, and wounded him dangerously.

"Coward!" exclaimed Orlando, "you have wounded me ere I had drawn! But now have at you—blood for blood!"

And now Orlando, in his turn, pressed hard upon Paulo, making him retreat before him, until at length he fell from loss of blood. Paulo then advanced again, and seeing the fatal end of his revenge, his savage nature suddenly relented. "What have I done!" he exclaimed in agony, dropping on his knee to assist Orlando. "I have shed the dear blood of the best heart in Mantua. But I have no tears; a villain hath none!"

"I can forgive, Sir," said Orlando, feebly, "if Heaven can!"

"Noble Orlando!" exclaimed Paulo, hiding his face in his hands: "Oh how mean a wretch do I now feel myself!—But you are fainting!—Help!—ho! help!"

"Nay, let me die in peace! Call not for help, for I die willingly—my hopes are in the grave!—Giulio! —my mother!—Alba!"

His life had bled out save the last few drops; and these were falling fast as Giulio entered the garden. "Oh thou abhorred wretch!" exclaimed he, as he glanced his eye through the thick underwood, and saw the bloody tragedy that had been played;—and rushing with frantic eagerness to Orlando, he raised him up a little from the ground, so that his head rested upon his knee. It was too late, for he was dying; and did but cast a faint smile upon him, when his noble spirit fled to heaven.

Giulio looked, for a moment, as if death had also struck him down; but his eye having turned from the smile of his friend upon the stare of horror which had fixed each feature of his brother's face, who stood motionless as if made marble by the deed he had done, he cried aloud to Paulo, "Stand from the body, villain, lest thy pestilent breath taint these dead remains of life's excellence!—Stand off, thou tiger, lest I strike thee with a frantic arm, and kill thee ere thou hast had time for penitence!"

Paulo, now recovering from his stupor, fell suddenly

at the feet of his brother, and clasping them, cried,—"My brother, spare me! oh, spare me!"

"Thy brother!" returned Giulio: "Murderer!—I am Lord Giulio; Cain was thy brother!—Away from my sight, I say; and think no more of me as one akin to thee, for here lies dead my brother—in killing Orlando, thou hast slain thyself!"

"I should have done so—and it is done!" exclaimed Paulo, as he struck a dagger into his breast, and fell staggering to the earth. Giulio, at this new horror, stood terror-struck and speechless. The attendants had by this time come up, and having raised Lord Paulo, bore him to the palace. They next looked to Lord Giulio, who stood as if blood-frozen and fixed to the spot; whilst others bore the cold body of Orlando, weeping as they went, for he was beloved by all.

To sum up these sad events: Orlando was buried with great pomp in the chapel of the Lamberti, the whole city mourning him; and his friend Giulio following his remains in sincere sorrow to the grave. His widowed mother did not long survive his death; and Paulo lingered but a few days afterwards, and was buried, by his own desire, near to him he despised till too late. The Count Montagni, seeing no longer a necessity for confining the Lady Alba, sent a command to release her, but that faithful lady, learning the tidings of her lover's death, refused to return to the world, and willingly dedicated herself to the service of the Virgin in the same religious house where she had been so long confined; and there died of a broken heart: while

Giulio and Bianca, having deeply mourned their severe loss in friends and kindred, at the end of two years wedded, and were happy in each other,—teaching their children the virtues of Orlando, and the constancy of Alba; and the young lovers of Mantua, even to this day, never hear their names without a sigh to the memory of an affection so unshaken, so pure, and so unfortunate.

THE OTHER FIG;

AN APOLOGUE.

Some years since, when I knew too little of the world, and thought too sensitively of its slightest opinion, I supped with an author of eminence as a wit and a poet, in the company of men of wit and poetry; and much mad mirth and high-exciting talk we had,—too mad and too high for me, who could only laugh, or wonder in silence, at so many brilliant imaginations, and watch the striking out of their fiery sparks of wit,

> So nimble and so full of subtle flame,
> As if that every one from whom they came
> Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
> And had resolved to live a fool the rest
> Of his dull life.

'I was all ear to hear,' and took in jests 'which might create a *laugh* under the ribs of death;' and thoughts and high imaginations which might 'lift a man to the third heaven of invention,' and thither indeed I was for once lifted. But there are souls of that weak wing, that so much the higher that they soar above the proper level of their flight, so much the lower they fall

below the level of their proper resting-ground; and as, under the excitement of wine, some men betray all their hidden foibles, and the flaws and weak parts in their characters, so, under the excitement of too much wit, I betrayed one frailty in mine.

It was after supper that a small basket of most mouth-melting figs was put on the friendly board, out of which, among other fingers, I was then moderate enough to deduct only one of its compressed lumps of deliciousness; but, in a short time after this, music and Mozart (which are synonymous) were proposed, and all the company left the supper-room for the music-parlour, with the exception, for two loitering moments, of the hospitable host and myself: it was in that short time that I fell from the heaven of my high exaltation, and proved myself of the 'earth earthy.'

The basket of figs still stood before me: they were sweet as the lips of Beauty, and tempting as the apples of Eden; and I was born of Eve, and inherited her 'pugging tooth.' It is no matter where temptation comes from, whether from Turkey or Paradise, if the man Adam to be tempted is ripe for ruin, any wind may shake him off the tree of stedfastness. Every man has his moment of weakness: I had two, and in those I fell.

"I really must take *the other fig*," said I, taking it before the words were out. I had no sooner possessed myself of it, than I blushed with the consciousness that I had committed something like a sin against self-restraint; and this confusion was increased by observ-

ing that the eyes of mine host had followed the act, as if they would inquire into it, and ascertain its true meaning, and perhaps set it down over-against the credit side of my character. I was ever afraid that I had the weakness of too much covetousness of the creature-comforts in my disposition, and that I had now betrayed it to a man who, though lenient and charitable, and inclined to think well of slight faults, would nevertheless weigh it in the balance of estimation, and think of it and me accordingly. I deserved to blush for it, and I did, to the bottom of the stairs, as I descended with him, chewing the sweet fruit of my offence, and the bitter consequence of it—an uneasy sense of shame.

But out of the greatest evil we may deduce good; and from the knowledge of our weakness derive strength. One thing comforted me in my disgrace: I had the courage to resist making an equivocatory apology for the act, which I was, for a moment, tempted to make; for the Devil, who has his *good things* at his tongue's end as well as much better beings, suggested, in a whisper, and with a nudge at my elbow, that I took it merely to have occasion for rewarding one of the wits with 'a fig for his joke,' mentioning him by name as patly as if he had it in his books. I thanked the Evil One for the suggestion. "But no," I whispered, "there is more comeliness in a naked fault than in the best-attired lie in the world; so I'll even let it stand naked as its mother Eve, who was the first weak creature that took *the other fig*." And here the

Devil chuckled, for he recollected the good fortune that fell into the first trap he baited with sin, and was not disappointed that he had set one in vain for me.

I have never forgotten this little incident of my incidental life; it has served as a moral check when I have coveted things which I did not want. And now, when I learn that some one, always famous for his covetousness, has at last been detected in a flagrant dereliction from honesty, I do not wonder at it, for I attribute it to an unrestrained habit of taking *the other fig*.

When I am told that a great gourmand of my acquaintance has died over his dessert-table, I am not surprised, for I have myself noticed that he always would eat *the other fig*.

When I hear that a man, once celebrated for the luxuriousness of his living, now wants a plain dinner, I say, "It is a pity; but he always would have *the other fig* on table."

When I see a sensible man staggering through the streets in drunken forgetfulness of himself and of 'the divine property of his being,' or behold him wallowing in 'a sensual sty,' and degrading the godlike uprightness of man to the grovelling attitude of the brute, I sigh, and say, "This fellow, too, cannot refrain from *the other fig*."

When I look on the miser, who, though possessed of gold and land, lives without money or house, using not the one as it should be used, and enjoying not the other as it should be enjoyed; and when I see that, though having more than he uses, he covets more, that

he may have still more than he can use, I scorn him as a robber of the poor, not to make himself richer than they, but poorer, more thankless and comfortless; and I pity the rich poor wretch, still grasping at *the other fig*.

When I hear of some wealthy trader with the four quarters of the world venturing forth again from the ark of safety and the home of his old age on his promised last voyage, and perishing through the peril of the way, I cannot but pity the man who could not lie quietly in the safe harbour of home, because he still craved after *the other fig*.

When I behold some heavy-pursed gamester enter one of those temples where Fortune snatches the golden offerings from the altars of her blind fools to fling them at the feet of her knaves who have eyes; and behold him issuing thence without a 'beggarly dernier,' to bless him with a dinner or a rope, I cannot help pitying him, that he should risk the fortune he had, for *the other fig*, which he has lost.

When I see some mighty conqueror, having many thrones under his dominion, and many sceptres in his hand, struggling for new thrones and sceptres, and one after one losing those he held, in his rapacious eagerness to snatch at those he would have, I cannot pity him if he loses so many fine figs in the hand to possess *the other fig* on the tree.

When I behold a rich merchant made poor by the extravagance and boldness of his trading speculations, when, if he could have been content with the wealth

he had, he might have lived sumptuously and died rich, I cannot help thinking it a pity that he could not be content without *the other fig*.

When I hear that a rich man has done a paltry action for the sake of some petty, penny-getting gain, I scorn him that he should so much covet *the other fig*.

When I see a man already high in rank, and ennobled by descent more than desert, cringing and stooping to a title-dispenser's heels for some new honour, (which is but a new disgrace where it is undeserved,) it is difficult not to despise *him*, though ever so honoured, who will so degrade himself for the sake of *the other fig*.

When I see a young and blooming wife, who might live happily with one who loves her, run off with the adulterer, I cannot but pity, though I blame her weakness, that she will not do without *the other fig*.

When I behold an old amorist panting and chasing after that pretty, fluttering, light-winged butterfly, Beauty, and panting and toiling after her in vain, I cannot but laugh to see the old man make himself so ridiculous for the sake of *the other fig*.

And to conclude, when I see the detected thief dragged in fetters to a dungeon, I think to myself, "Ay, this is one of the probable consequences of a wilful indulgence in *the other fig*!"

TRUE USE OF RICHES.

THE TRUE USE OF RICHES.

CHARLES JOHNSON and Howard Jones were chums at the same school. Johnson was at that time set down for a lad of a dull, slow spirit and wit; and, apparently without feeling, felt silently for all who deserved it, and sometimes for those who did not: whilst Jones, with much loud talk of feeling, and a collection of the most approved maxims of charity at his tongue's end, seemed never to possess either. These boy-friends were parted; and became men at last. Charles burst out into the man of genius: the early morning of his life was apparently dull, but its noon gave promise of a glorious after-day; whilst Howard, who in his youth had excited the greatest hopes of his friends, sunk into the mere man of the world. Though the one was now mammon-minded and sordid almost to avarice, and the other a mere creature of the elements, 'that plays in the plighted clouds;' though one was poor and the other rich; though as dissimilar as darkness and light—as immixable as water and oil, as opposite as ice and fire, they were nevertheless friends—such friends as the world understands by that much-abused word.

Howard, indeed, throve much more rapidly than his friend grew unfortunate. But to keep up the appearance of friendship and humility, when he fell in with him he would not loose his sleeve till he had him seated at his silver-spread table; and Charles, who was too noble to be envious of another man's happiness or wealth, was there the merriest of the merry, and kept the table in a roar with equal pleasure to himself and to others. Time, however, was rather slow in reconciling the riches of the one to the poverty of the other, but did eventually so far succeed, that Jones began to care about half as much for Johnson's neediness as he did himself:—and here we come to our story.

Howard had employed a skilful mechanic to repair his chaise; and the business being done, as was his custom, he thought no more about paying than Dives did of Lazarus. The needy creditor had suffered his wealthy debtor to stand in his books longer than the usual time, for he was (as a poor tradesman often is, to the shame of the rich) afraid to ask "so great a man as Mr. Jones" for so paltry a sum. At length, (for Patience herself will sometimes grow impatient,) the poor man called himself. Mr. Jones could not look at his bill then: he had "a particular friend with him," (Johnson was there:) he might call again next month. The humble man turned away from the proud man's door with weary foot, for he had journeyed some miles. The month passed away, and he called again; but he could not see him: ("Thomson, his particular

friend Thomson, was there:") he might call again in a week: he called in a week; he was not at home: (his still more particular friend, Wilson, was there then:)—"call again:" he did; he was not up:—"call again:" he did; he was not down:—"call in the city;" he was out of town:—"call at the villa;" he was in town:—in short, let him call when he would, and where he would, it was to no purpose.

Charles's humane heart was shocked at the evident reluctance of Jones to part with his money; and resolved, when an opportunity offered, to punish his unfeeling friend in some way that should exhibit his covetousness in its true light. In the meantime, (by one of those accidents in the life of a poor man of letters, which ought to admit him into an hospital as much as a broken leg, and thus, by keeping him in at Bartholomew's, keep him out of Bedlam) happening to have ten guineas in his pocket, he privately paid the poor mechanic the five he so much wanted, contenting himself with the hope that when he had thoroughly shamed his penurious rich friend thoroughly again into feeling, he should get repaid.

An opportunity soon served for his scheme. Jones had lately had a large estate in the West Indies bequeathed to him by a rich bachelor uncle, and was in daily expectation of receiving the proceeds. Johnson, by some means, had heard of the arrival of the agent at Liverpool, but concealed the information. In the mean time Jones betrayed such a feverish impatience to finger the expected cash, that, what with

plethora and passion, and the megrims into which every day's disappointment threw him, he took to his bed. It was now that Charles determined to effect, if possible, a cure of his rapacious love of money, and to revenge the neglect and wrong he had done to the sick creditor.

Accordingly, on the following morning, before the city shop-boys had watered the usual rings in the dust of the dog-days, he was at Jones's door, dressed in all the tight importance and loose nankeen trowsers of a warm West Indian. The knocker was as yet unmuffled: he knocked importantly; and after a reasonable dressing-time, descends an Appearance in a mob-cap, with a dull, death-watching face, and a mouth yawning to the circumference of a Dutch oven: it was Mrs. Shufflebottom, the nightly nurse. "Mrs. Jones, I presume, Madam?" said Charles, bowing most respectfully to her inaudible list shoes. "No, Sir," simpered the flattered feminine, very proud of the mistake, "Mrs. Shufflebottom, night-nurse, &c. at your service," curtseying herself down to about half her altitude. "Well, then, good morning to Mrs. Shufflebottom, at my service? Pray how is Jones this morning? I've just arrived from the West Indies, and the first thing which I hear is, that Jones, my dear, generous Jones, is ill!" "Yes, ill indeed, Sir, poor dear gentleman: he's had five physicians!" "Five physicians!" exclaimed Charles, "that's very dangerous, indeed! He must be a hale, hearty man to survive such an attack! Five physicians! poor

man! poor Jones! Good morning, Madam: my compliments, and all that." "May I have the honour of your name?" curtseyed Mrs. S. "Oh certainly, certainly: Hurricane, Madam—Mr. Hurricane, from the West Indies—Hurricane, the agent. You'll wake poor Mr. Jones, if he should happen to be asleep, and tell him that I called, but not wishing to disturb him, will call again." "La! Sir," exclaimed Mrs. S., "you are the very gentleman that Mr. Jones is so anxious to see!" "Very possible—very likely; but I really cannot wait: I've my cousin Thomson to call on, and condole with him on the death of his wife's pug-dog—poor things, they have no children, and such a loss is consequently very terrible!" "But he's so anxious to see you," urged Mrs. S. "Ho! certainly he shall: but I must see Thomson immediately: you'll say my name is Hurricane—Hurricane: I am in the greatest possible haste, or I would wait on Mr. Jones. Good morning, Madam! Hurricane—you'll remember?" tapping Mrs. S. on the elbow impatiently with a walking-cane; and then off he went, leaving the nurse all womanly wonder at his coolness.

Two hours are past, and he has again knocked at Jones's door, as if he would knock him down who opened it; and again Mrs. Shufflebottom descends in all the freshness of a laced tucker, flounced apron, morning gown, and 'shining morning face.' "Well, how's Jones now?" "The powers of goodness!" exclaimed she, lifting up her hands and her eyes;

"I'm as glad as a May-queen that you've come back so soon, Sir! Poor Mr. Jones, as soon as he heard that a white gentleman from the West *Hinges* had called, leaped out of bed like a lunatic madman." "Just so! Then he is better? I'm very glad to hear it indeed—very! Good morning, Madam, and my compliments, and whatever is usual to be said on these interesting occasions." (*Going.*) "But, my dear Sir," remonstrated Mrs. S., seizing him by the button, "he wishes of all things to see you: pray now do, dear Mr. Harry Cane, walk in!" implored the kindly nurse. "It's impossible, my dearest Madam!" "But he's dying, Sir!" insisted she. "Very good: but he must not die till I see him; I've the most positive engagement with my particular friend, Wilson, who is leaving town for his country-house at Islington. The resigned old gentleman would think me particularly unfeeling if I did not see him set off." "Well, but my dear Sir"—"Mrs. Shufflebottom!" said Charles, with mock earnestness and solemnity of manner, "it is impossible. Good morning, and my compliments as before."—(*Gone.*)

Mrs. S. looked all astonishment, and quietly shutting the door, and then opening it again, to look once more after the author of her wonderment, she shut it, and went up stairs to poor Jones, who was more sick with impatience than any other complaint, and told him what a strange gentleman "that Mr. Harry Cane was." "The man must be a brute, to trifle with a dying man!" vociferated Jones, as he pushed his patient

nurse out of the room, and half-way down the stairs. "If *I* had ever treated any man so, I should have deserved this!"—and then he kicked his rheumatic and venerable valet into the ante-chamber.

At eight o'clock Charles returns: the knock, the Mrs. S. and the "Well, how 's Jones?" again occur: to which the nurse, who had not yet recovered from the rudeness with which she had been thrust out of the bed-room, answered—"Ah, Sir, poor Mr. Jones is certainly mad, and will not outlive this day!" "Exactly so," replied Charles, coolly playing with his cane; "then I'll call to-morrow; for I have promised to meet the very best fellow in the world, my friend Jackson. Good morning, Mrs. Shuffle——" ("bottom" he would have said, but the good nurse at that moment remembering the push she had had down stairs,—or else impatient at the supposed Mr. Hurricane's prevaricating puttings-off, shut the door in his face, and went off in a huff.)

At nine he returns, and rings, for he was afraid the lion's head would not answer his inquiries, as it was by this time muffled in white leather, and looked totally sick and silent; but the wary Mrs. S. saw through the blinds that it was her old troubler, and perhaps out of a momentary spirit of revenge for the violence which had been done to her sacred office and more sacred person, refused to open. At ten, therefore, he sends a ticket-porter, with instructions to ring long and loud: this succeeds, and down descends the surly nurse, looking as if she could wring his nose as long as he

had rang the bell. "Ho—a gentleman wants to know whether Mr. Jones could see Mr. Hurricane some time next week?" Jones heard this message, and losing the little patience he ever possessed, bawled out, "Tell the rascal to come here immediately, or I'll have him arrested for embezzlement, and teach him what it is to trifle with a dying man!"

The porter departs growling, and at twelve another comes to say, that "the *gemman* would wait on him to-morrow, as soon as he had seen Mr. Simpson, his tailor." At one a third inquires how Mr. Jones was at twelve; at two, the same porter comes to know how he was at one; and at three Johnson himself re-appears, and ringing louder than before, Jones is heard, in the distance, swearing like a cutpurse. "Tell the barbarous Barbadoes rascal to come up stairs, or I'll send the contents of a blunderbuss after his heels!" were the last words of Jones, as his man opened the door, with an "Ah, how do ye do, Mr. Johnson?" "How's Jones now?" asked Charles, with a negro-bullying, West-Indian sort of voice, that seemed to be half choked with raw rum, raw sugar, and suffocating cigars. At this critical juncture, Mrs. Shufflebottom appeared from a side-parlour, and Jones at the stair-head, in his bed-gown and velvet cap. This was an unexpected *dénouement*.

Charles was now compelled to enter in; and being asked his motive for such an unseasonable frolic, and having explained, "that it was to teach him, who had been insensible to the sickness and patience of another,

the cruelty of being trifled with, and the pain which is worse than sickness, of seeing man indifferent to the sufferings of his fellow-man," (here he produced the poor chaise-mender's receipt for his five guineas),—Jones saw, with a blush, the cruelty of his neglect of the needy creditor, and taking Charles by the hand, pressed it with more than his usual warmth, forgave him the manner of his lesson, forgot his megrims; and patiently waiting the arrival of his agent, (who came the next day with the immense revenues of his estate,) is now a man of great wealth—gives liberally to all who want that do not deserve to want—is kind and considerate to all, whether poor or rich; and loves his friend above all men, as the man who taught him the true value of wealth, and that it can only give happiness where it bestows the means of making those happy who are less the favourites of Fortune.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES.

No. III.

A RAINY DAY IN SUMMER.

'———Now gradual sinks the breeze
Into a perfect calm, that not a breath
Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
Or rustling turn the many twinkling-leaves
Of aspen tall. * * * * At last,
The clouds consign their treasures to the fields,
And softly shaking on the dimpled pool
Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow
In large effusion o'er the freshened world.'—THOMSON.

AND now, sudden as light, descends the freshening shower, brightening the dark green leaves, and gladdening the drooping flowers that fainted under the hot breathings of June. And now the tall trees stand about like the Dryades, and flutter their fan-like leaves, and look stately and beautiful; and the violet breathes her renewed life; and the rose tints the rain-drops on its breast with its fairest of hues, and impregnates them with its most delicate of odours; and the lady lily stands, like the Naiad of some sylvan spring, holding up her silver urn to catch the rain: and the clover-

fields, chequered with green, purple, and white, breathe forth a wide fragrance. And now the bees, heedless of the rain—so stirring is their industry—hover and nestle among the luscious globes of clover, and probe their honeyed tubes, or hum at the mouth of the bugle-shaped honeysuckle, as if they would sound through it a merry call to their scattered fellow-labourers, to bring them where the fragrance and the honey abound; and the blossoming purple bean (which botanists, with more imagination than is usually to be discerned in their over-learned designations, have called *papiliona-ceous*, or butterfly-shaped,) sweet in all hours, but sweetest in the evening, when the delicious dews are studding its leaves as with pearls, now scatter their fragrance to the air; and balmy

> ' ——— Arabia cannot boast
> A fuller gale of joy, than liberal thence
> Breathes through the sense, and takes the ravish'd soul.'

And now the pale and damasked dog-roses, from every hedge breathe their new breath, as they momently burst from buds to flowers, and expand their mouths to quaff the first delicious drops which they have yet tasted of rain or dew; and from the fields, where the hay-harvest is for a day stopped in the gathering-in, comes a cool scent of the thinly-scattered hay, as the summer-freckled maids,

> ' Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
> Their kindled graces burning o'er their cheeks,'

in well-ordered rows, spread out the hay-cocks over

the field, until the rain-clouds have passed, and the ripening sun return; and the cottage children, who have been tumbling and tossing among the fragrant heaps 'bareheaded on the green," though they have lost a dry sport, have found a wet one, and run in and out from among the trees, where

> 'The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard,
> Beneath the umbrageous multitude of leaves,'

and receive the sprinkling of the rain, and feel, with Lord Bacon, but without knowing it as wisely, 'the spirit of the universe' shed on them, sleeking their curling locks of summer's sun-burnt sandyness of hue, until they shine like the yellow tresses of the 'rich-haired youth of morn.' And now the warm-mouthed kine stand out in the grateful coolness, and bathe themselves with the gradual rain, tearing the freshened grass with an impatient healthy hunger; and the strutting cock, who foretold the shower, crows incessantly and triumphantly, as if proud at the fulfilling of his prophecy. And now the thrush sings among the leaves glittering like emeralds, and enjoys their freshness, and the drops, which, as the waking winds stir under the trees, fall from them, 'like minute drops from off the eaves,' on his wings, that flutter, but have no wish to fly. And now the plough-boy's favourite, and whistling rival, the blackbird, pipes from the low and drenched copse; the lark soars to heaven, and soaring sings, and beats off the descending drops with the winnowing of his wings, sailing through the spungy

rain-clouds, and making his merry way among them like a light ship among the snow-bergs of a northern sea in spring. And now the humane robin, who knows all the bitter winds that blow in winter, and the chill of its snows, that cover up and conceal the berry-bearing thorn from him, and the drenching of its unwholesome dews, and long-continuing rains,—sleeks his brown wings, and forgetting the past, and pleased with the present, sings his summer song, and revels like a merry wassailer in the warm rain. And now the nightingale, that sings, at this season, both night and day, flutters her wetted wings, and warbles her various sweetness and finely-laboured song; and all the green world is happy, fresh, fair, and fragrant, and feels a second spring.

And now, in populous cities, the weather-sage looks at his glass, and finds that *it* rains, but will not even glance a look out of doors, through his withered window-shrubbery, to see the watery truth descending in sewer-swelling showers, but satisfies himself with the information of Mrs. Jones, his housekeeper, the shooting of whose corns is regulated by her master's weather-glass, and who lets him know that it rains by the clatter of her pattens; and Mr. Jenkins, the corn-merchant, who never saw a corn-field in Mark-lane, and never was three miles either way distant from the sound of Bow bells, dreads that the rain will do too much good to crops in general, and lower the market. And now Mrs. Selina Soaper, who 'takes in washing,' also takes

in what she has washed, her linen, that looks as if it had been laundered in saffron-water, or dipped in the yellow waves of Pactolus; and poor poets court the shedding of the shower on their mouse-coloured black, which is a wonderful reviver of your villainous worn-out sables, and gives them a blackness 'beyond the reach of art.' And now your dapper city beau-clerks, who look as proud and pave-strutting as if they were of the noble family of the Beauclercs, having put on the annual new coat of blue this morning, which is the anniversary of the last new one of black, damn the sputtering water-spouts and shouldering umbrellas; and are particularly penniless with the sweepers of crossings, savage with the mud-splashing scavengers, and horror-struck at a strait of difficulty upon which they are fast bearing down, and must pass through,—a Scylla, in a floury baker, and a Charybdis, in a sooty sweep; but rather than endure the peril of the passage, prefer standing up under the church-wall, and, wheeling backwards, receive the baptismal benediction of a blubbering cherub, and rushing in damp horror to avoid that, run into the oily arms of the lamplighter, who cracks their shins with his can, and then, like a good Samaritan, pours oil into the wound he has made, and leaping up his ladder, lifts himself above expostulation; —but if they persist, he keeps them at half a ladder's length before or behind; when, if they succeed in getting alongside, by the most possible of all accidents, he swings round his ladder under pretence of turning

to a lamp, and knocks the beau into Mr. Epps's many-windowed shop; on which his man rushes out with ham-and-beef hands, and indifferent to the captiousness of a new coat, and ignorant of the effects of first causes, collars the blue coat, and insists on five shillings for his trouble; during which process the lamplighter has taken several steps, besides his ladder, away, and is gone about his business, and throws his oiled cotton-wicks on passing puppies with impunity. And now Miss Slattern, who had looked with jaundiced eyes on Miss Smart's fashionable finery and pink satin shoes, as they walked out spotless and bright as Cinderella's slippers in the morning, sees her return home in the thick of the shower, coachless, and bedabbled with dirt in the run out of the rain; and seeing the pride of her rival humbled, feels her morning envy satisfied at noon. And now your younger Templars with more bags than briefs, stand at the Middle Temple Gate, and seem, to the pretty Milliners at the corner of Chancery-lane, to call a coach; but as soon as the fair sempstresses' eyes are turned another way, slip slily and suddenly under the narrow-spanning arch of that *Rainbow* which is not the sign of a concluding storm, but of a genteel house of call for attic attorneys and chamberless counsellors. And now Mrs. Tomkins, who was married last May, pouts because 'hubby' wont treat her with a coach to 'go shopping,' and 'hubby' frowns because he suspects he sees early symptoms of extravagance developing in Mrs. T.; and there they sit at the window, back to back—a diphthong man and

wife—legally one, but literally two. And now the half-pay militia lieutenant, who in the morning dusted his well-polished boots with his gloves, lest he should be supposed vulgar enough to walk, finds to his much vexation that mud is not dust,—but turns his knowledge to a gentlemanly account; and as he is too poor to afford to be thought capable of walking, determines to look as equestrian as a pedestrian can be supposed to look, and cultivates a judicious selection of splashes without spurs; and switching his boots, unconscious of any horse but the one whose hide they were originally made of, looks as much as possible like a lord whose horse and groom are in the next street. And now hackney-coachmen draw off the stand, to draw the pockets of the *un-up* of an extra fare, and put on their winter hoarseness with their extra top-coats, and look engaged though they really wish to look engaging, and are as civilly uncivil as the letter of the act of parliament allows. And now the water-sprinklers have a sinecure, the business being done by deputy; and that slowest of rivers, the Fleet, runs now with affected animation to the Thames, which looks much fuller and filthier than it did yesterday; and old ladies complain of the colour of their tea-water. And now the street-keepers have not to disperse the defying boys from hop-scotching the pavement; and the ladies, who are the only beauty of a great city, and sole sight worth seeing, are all either coached or housed; and none but the plodders are stirring; and there is no voice of music in the streets—for fiddlers cannot draw a bow

and hold an umbrella at the same moment; and the hurdy-gurdy woman (whom a country cousin of mine took for an itinerant grinder of coffee), fearful of the wet on the excruciating bowels of her music mill, is still sheltering under the gateway at St. Clement's; and all the town is one wide kennel of muddiness, and wateriness, and splash.

THE ECCENTRIC POET.

You shall perceive him dive his hand into his pocket; he would insinuate by this, and have you infer, that he has money, but no such thing is there: it were as hopeful to expect that the collision of two flakes of snow would make a jingle, as hope to hear the sound of one shilling duetting-it with another. The hand went in empty, it came out so; and though he buttons up that pocket so carefully, there is nothing in it:—it is as farthingless as a poor's-box.

About four you shall perceive him picking his teeth with the worn-down stump of a pen that has written you, in its time, half a dozen odes 'To the scornful Nona,' who proves to be his landlady, a fat and fifty-year-old widow;—a folio of poems upon Fortune and Hope, Charity and Independence;—odes 'On Retirement,' composed in the seclusion of his back-garret; with some hundred sonnets to and on ruins, woods, forests, hills, castles, rivers, streamlets, and lakes, the 'overflowings of his mind,' and ten sonnets on a waterfall, written to the overflowings of his landlady's water-butt;—a hundred extempores, (each one produced after a long November night's labour;) a

dozen of dedication-asking letters to beggarly noblemen, by which he netted a clear profit of twenty kicks on his unseated seat of honour, thirty door-shuttings in his face, and a French half-crown insinuated into his pocket by a sentimental fat porter at a great man's door, who proved to be more of a Mecænas than his master;—besides plays, operas, and farces; and pamphlets on the easiest mode of paying off the national debt, written when he was dunned for two-pence, an arrear in an account of three-pence due to his milk-woman.

Now you would suppose this picking of teeth indicated his having dined: no such thing; he picks them, that he may remind you to remark, "What, you have dined?" upon which he promptly answers, "No, only lunched;" that is, he has eaten a gooseberry. You cannot choose but have him to dinner; and then you learn by the state of his appetite that he breakfasted with the Lord Knows-who.

He says little during dinner: he allows that there was an appetite-provoking air abroad that morning; and when he gives over eating, which is a very protracted operation, remarks, to prevent your doing it, "I don't know when I ate a heartier dinner;" neither does he, unless you can tell him when he last dined with you, or where he dined the day before.

For his wit, which savours of the true attic, it comes in with the salt, but it is broached with the wine. He denies that beef is 'a sore spoiler of your wit.' He is witty because it is expected of him: but his wit is, at

first, rather disagreeable and bitter; it is like *sauce piquante* to your wine, and an olive to your meat. Like wormwood, however, the more you have of it, the less you dislike it, and you at last palate it. He takes care to say as many brilliant things as the dullards, his auditors, will be a week in retailing as their own;—the Mr. Smiths take all he says on books and women as their share; and the Mrs. Smiths all he says on men as their's.

For his suit, you instantly know it to be the livery of those elderly maiden ladies the Muses, to whose suite he is attached, *con amore*. His coat, once black, is, through long exposure, of a dun colour—the most disagreeable of all complexions to the eye of a poet. All things change! Its white button-moulds were once snugly enveloped in dark drab; but, after much struggling, they have at last protruded themselves to public notice: and as they more or less shew their bony circumferences, remind us of the Moon in her various quarters or phases. For the rest of his suit it is suitable; and is in what painters call 'keeping' with what I have just described. Most likely his stockings are of a rusty, mouse-coloured black; and his shoes are very like to be less brilliant than his head. Day and Martin might, indeed, sneer at their poverty of polish, and bless their stars that brilliant blacking is a more saleable commodity than wit. Yet he continues a faithful and most devoted servant of the Muses, though his whole volume of Man is ill-bound, however well-lettered; and his morning-gown is illuminated

like an old missal, and as full of squares and diamonds as an old-fashioned window: indeed, the patches on it are so numerous, that, like Malone's Shakspeare, you cannot find the original text for the notes.

His lodging is as high as his circumstances are low; its furniture will be hard to describe, seeing that it has none. His bed is a truckle one; he reconciles its poverty to himself, indeed he considers it poetical, for he remembers that that choice spirit, Mercutio, preferred his truckle to a field bed. It lies immediately beneath a window that looks as much like a chess-board as a window,—one pane being white, and giving as much light as its unclean dinginess will allow; and the next black (or blocked up): the net-work of a cobweb serves as a ventilator in one corner, and Baxter's 'Light to the Unconverted' darkens the skylight. He has a chair *sans* back; and a deal table, a deal too large for the most unscanted meal ever spread on it by its present possessor. Then he has a corner cupboard, 'more for ornament than use;' an old-fashioned, lacquered, and gilt thing, like the Lord Mayor's coach, containing in its compartments, two views of Chinese pagodas, with Mandarins walking over the heads of each other,—temples standing under bridges, and boats going over dry-ground, the gilding nearly gone. Its non-contents are too numerous to mention; but its contents are—one plate and two-thirds of another, both very dusty from disuse; two or three rusty odd knives and forks, the forks usually

short in one prong; one cracked bason, a cream jug *minus* handle, and a tea-pot *sans* nose.

The walls of his attic are not without their ornaments. On one side, you may perceive some half-dozen ballads and 'last words of notorious malefactors,' pasted immovably against the once white-washed wall by the last tenant, a son of St. Crispin, since hanged; on another side, is the portrait of that most celebrated of all celebrated horses, Skewball, the decoration of a previous tenant, a groom out of place. Over the fire-place is a portrait of Shakspeare, framed, but not glazed: in summer, after you have succeeded in brushing off the flies, to gain a look at it, you would suppose it to be a dot engraving, but it is really an aquatint, the dotting is the work of Messieurs the Flies. He had till lately an old bust of 'one John Milton, a blind man, who wrote a long poem:' said Milton has since accidentally lost his nose as well as his eyes; but he consoles himself with its still resembling a poet, and calls it Davenant. A bust of Sappho stands in a nook by his bed-side; it was a long time draperied by a thick, broad, black cobweb, which having fallen (for cobwebs as well as kingdoms must fall) upon her temples, she has now not taken the veil, but has had it bestowed on her.

His library consists of many odd things and much literary lumber. The blank leaf of a copy of the 'New Way to Pay Old Debts,' is very appropriately filled with a journal of the same, some of long standing and

large amount, contracted before he was known to be a poet, (for who would trust a known poet?)—his later debts are trifling, and are kept on the back of the title-page.

A copy of the 'Castle of Indolence' is much dog's-eared and grease-spotted, as if from repeatedly going to sleep over the *second* canto, which seems to have inspired the indolence it deprecates; the *first* canto is respectably clean, and its beauties are carefully underlined. A copy of the same author's poem on 'Liberty,' with MS. annotations, appears to have beguiled the slow hours whilst he lodged in the Fleet. Akenside's 'Pleasures of Imagination' is much thumbed and read. The covers, titles, and preface of Blackmore's short poem 'The Creation,' the title bearing this motto, 'Let there be light, and there was light,'—the poem gone,—seems to have been torn up for kindling his lamp; for he burns oil, as he considers it classical—his real motive is economy. Phillips's 'Splendid Shilling' (the only one he is at times possessed of) is in a very worn and depreciated state, and not worth sixpence. Shakspeare's Works are in eight volumes of eight various editions. 'Paradise Lost' was borrowed by a money-getting relation; and 'Paradise Regained' was mortgaged for a beef-steak at Dolly's chop-house: so that, as he says, 'Paradise Lost' cannot be *regained*, and 'Paradise Regained' is *lost*. The 'Wealth of Nations' he made over to a wandering Jew-clothier, one of the tribe of Gad, for a pair of appendages to his braces; and a small stereotyped

Spenser was, at the same time, transmuted into a great coat. Most of his valuable works may be found in the before-mentioned relative's library, who, as he is merely a moneyed man, and not a poet, estimates the value of every thing by its appearance (the way of the world);

> 'For what's the worth of any thing,
> But just so much as it will bring.'

For a long time our Poet was afflicted with Bibliomania; and, during that period, all his talk, and even his dreams, were of Caxton and Wynkin de Worde. He could not buy rare books, but he could purchase priced catalogues of those which had been sold; and though his extravagance was sometimes bounded by his means, he never could resist purchasing a catalogue for ten shillings, even when his ten toes were covetous of its Russia-binding, for a cover to their semi-nudity. He was, at length, known by the distinguishing appellation of the Cat.-(or catalogue)-hunter. He was sometimes told that he had more *Cats*. than caught mice, yet he went on with his hobby. At last he discovered that he had really more catalogues than books; this gave the alarm to his literary pride, and partially cured him of his folly. Yet even now he is a more inveterate stall-hunter than any I-would-be-prebend in the three kingdoms; but a book-stall is his game: he'll scent you one at half a mile; and when he has run it down, will nose it (from near-sightedness) for an hour or two before you can call him off, till he is as black in the hands

(if not in the face) as a whitesmith. He has, indeed, an instinctive faculty of tracing out a book-stall: the musty smell of an old Caxton is sweeter to his nose than the scent of roses; and a peep into a soiled 'Mirror for Magistrates' more picturesque than the Norfolk window of stained glass.

Such are some of the eccentricities and whimsicalities of a man of undoubted genius.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PICTURES.

No. IV.

A DOG-DAY.

Now the dog-star reigns, and the weather is really '*insulting* hot.' Now old ladies, who dare venture a-shopping, go parasolling their withered perfections along, and entertain a decided dread of injuring the immaterial whiteness of their skins, which have ceased to be compared to 'lilies' and 'snows,' and other sonnet-like similes, for somewhat more than thirty summers; —and now old gentlemen look very earnestly at their thermometers, and find that they are within a few degrees of self-combustion. Now dogs go mad, and dowdies go to Margate; and steam-boats are full, and dancing on deck is thought vulgar, and cigars quite unnecessary. Now people who *must* stay in town crawl along, a caterpillar's pace, in the shade of dead walls, and look half as dead as themselves. Now butchers remind you of a late comedian—they emit such a *suetty* smell;—and now butchers' boys are particularly inveterate against blue-bottles, and have not

common patience with common flies; and butchers' dogs dream of gnats, and become excessively snappish. Now cooks suffer a daily martyrdom; and scullion-boys have a bitter time of it, and wish they had been born black in the Western Ind, instead of being beaten so by the cooks of the Western End, who are now more than ever impatient, hot, angry, and savage. Now Aldermen puff and blow like grampusses left aground, and go about the city, at every hundred yards dabbing their foreheads with their white handkerchiefs, which are in half an hour wet to the initial corners. Now pump-handles are going all day long, like Captain Sabine's pendulums vibrating seconds; and Aldgate-pump seems as if it had not yet recovered from the late panic in the City—there is such a continual run upon it;—and now dry dogs stand under the pumps barking at the handles, in utter helplessness of themselves, and look with watering eye at the cooling fluid as it pours into pitchers and cans, and think unutterable things of the iron ladle and the idle boys, neither of whom offer them a drop. Now firemen, who are also watermen, throw off as insufferable their Sun-Fire-office jackets, and cannot endure to recollect that there ever was such a thing as a house on fire; and if you tell them of one in the next street, they break out in a preparatory perspiration. Now amateurs, who row up to Richmond in funnies, find their amusement rather serious and sedentary, and think the towing-horses on the Putney shore have a much easier time of it, for they work in the shade;—and now those more

adventurous, who get as far as Twickenham *Ayte*, make up their minds to *hate* Twickenham all the rest of their lives. Now pedestrians, who have a taste for rural delights, and have five miles to walk, die through two, and d—n every step of the other three;—and now the red-faced and white-hatted gentlemen who drive the short-stages are suspected to meet with many more half-way houses than ordinary: their wit, too, is thought to be more than usually dry. Now table-beer casks become very soon on the tilt, to the alarm of stewards and the astonishment of butlers, who wonder how they could possibly have run out so fast; and the groom, who comes from Yorkshire, doubts whether it be not possible for twenty gallons of table-ale to drink up each other in such dry weather! Now publicans use twice their usual quantity of chalk;—and the weekly beer-bill makes the acceptor look as grave at its amount as if it was his own funeral expenses;—and now maiden ladies, living on small annuities, swallow twice the accustomed quantum of souchong at a sitting. Now fashionables wish that it was not fashionable to be seen in Rotten-Row when the sun looks perpendicularly down from the heavens; and the *haut ton*, who meet at midnight in full assemblies, may rather be called the *hot* ton;—and now it is as difficult to get a seat in the Park as in the Parliament; and those who do, seem as if they had obtained it after a long contest, and look as if they expected to be chaired as the sitting members of St. James's Mall. Now fat persons of both sexes wish they had not indulged so

much in the 'good things of this life' in the winter months, for which they pay a horrid interest during the summer ditto; and much they envy the lean and comparatively cool creatures who move about them without being drowned in their own unction, like a goose basted in his own fat;—and now elderly gentlemen who wear powder, and won't wear chip hats, are all over *admirations*, *colons*, and *commas* on coat-collars and black waistcoats, from 'the minute drops' of their powdered perspiration. Now a short-sighted person of much consequence, who pats an iron post on the top, and cries "Stand out of the way, boy!" immediately feels as if he had committed a mistake, and blistered his fingers;—and now it is really an East-Indian sort of indulgence to meet an old friend who looks coolly on one, and begins *not* to remember whether one's name is Smith or Simpson; and we cannot resent the *cut*, the coolness of the *cutter's* assurance is so agreeable. Now bakers look up from their Tartarian territories, and deem the arching heaven over this earth to be a larger sort of oven, in which men are baked instead of meats;—and bakers' men become, if any thing, rather more crusty than their crustiest loaves. Now fishmongers are observed to be particularly anxious, about dusk, to throw a light upon their fish, lest too much darkness should afford an opportunity to their mackerel and other 'small deer' to throw a light upon themselves; for it is a villainous piece of candour in your stale fish, that they will not

keep their own secret;—and now fishmongers need not boil the blue out of lobsters, for, if they have any reminiscences of their former cool enjoyments whilst tenants of the deep, they will stew themselves into the becoming red. Now farmers would not mind subscribing for a shower of rain; and pathways across fields are chapped and gaping; and cows ruminate in dry ponds, and wish themselves camels (for they can carry a pail of water with them), and look with horror at dry fodder, and wishfully at their own milk in the dairy-pails; and farm-yard dogs cannot bark, from drouth; and ducks waddle far and near to discover a ditch not quite dry, with duckweed overgrown, but cannot find such a duck's paradise either near or far, and return home in melancholy procession, ruminating in silence on the 'halcyon days' of hard showers and overflowing brooks, dykes, rivers, and rivulets.

'Now the mower *whets* his scythe,' and wishes he could *wet* himself at the same time. Now several Miss Smiths tumble quite promiscuously over little hillocks of hay, where it is making; and several Simpsons, not noticing where they fell, fall over them; and the elder Miss Smith seems quite shocked, and cries "For shame, Selina, Celestina, and Seraphina! how can you be so vulgar?" but is cut off in the middle of her remonstrance by a middle-aged Simpson, who tosses her on to a spare haycock, and seems in no hurry to let her rise, till she is sufficiently suffocated with hay and smothered with kisses;—and here-

upon Irish hay-makers seem very indignant, but are notwithstanding pacifiable by penny subscriptions for the havoc made. Now a thermometer, if taken into a summer theatre, stands at 130° during the first piece, and at 160° during the farce, which is no joke—and play-goers are to be pitied for their infatuation;—and now the New-river Tritons and Neptunes, when they plunge into the tank of Sadler's Wells theatre, hiss like so many bars of hot iron thrown out of a foundry; and the gods in the gallery cry out "Throw him over!" taking the noise to be the sibillation of a hypercritical one-shilling critic, and o' the instant some innocent individual Jones or Jenkins is tossed into the pit, to the smashing of one chandelier, and the breaking of two necks which have no connexion with the Swan in Lad-lane: whereupon the manager is called for to apologise, and Tom Dibdin advances to the foot-lights, makes a speech, bows, withdraws as he bows, and plumps backward into the 'real water' for which that theatre is famous, and the curtain drops amidst considerable applause. Now the Lyceum shrubbery cannot deceive one for a moment into the expectation of coolness, if one observes the stewed dandies and *greens* which make up the show of that half-price paradise for 'prentice-boys; and Mr. Arnold, if he really wishes to keep his theatre open, instead of introducing Scotch and Irish *airs* into his operas would find it more to his interest to introduce the *airs* of heaven. Now amateur laureates, having birth-day odes and epithalamia to produce, go mad by dozens;—and now

another sort of poet, who begins an *Ode to the Dog-star* somewhat o' this fashion—

> What, ho! red Dog-star—sultry, sweating ranger
> Of summer skies—thou veriest dog in manger,
> That cannot this green world of woods enjoy,
> And those who would dost day by day destroy—
> Making our city's Falstaffs lard the earth,
> Its Master Slenders thinner in their girth,—
> Art a volcano, where young comets gorge?
> Or Vulcan's foundry, where fierce Jove doth forge
> His thunderbolts? or heaven's burning-glass—a hole
> Burning right through this earth, to melt that Pole
> Which Captain Parry found he could not pierce,
> With all his skill in naval *carte* and *tierce*,—
> And make a passage, when he next shall venture,
> Not by the old way, but plump through the centre?
> Or dost thou mean to burn earth to a cinder,
> And make its firmament's festoons thy tinder?—&c. &c.

finds such fiery thoughts 'very tolerable and not to be endured,' and finding too that his inkstand and brain are both as dry as 'remainder biscuit,' resigns himself without further struggling to an obscure destiny and the dog-days.

A CHAPTER ON PIGS.

A CHAPTER ON PIGS.

If there is any thing in which perverseness is humorously provoking, it is in the stubborn wrong-headedness of a thorough-paced Pig. To see one of these creatures going to Smithfield is a certain cure for a quinsey: Melancholy herself could not choose but laugh, till her black lungs 'crew like chanticleer;' his perverseness is so straight-forward, though his course is not, (or he will not understand it so to be,) but is as devious as the meanderings of that most vagabond filthy rivulet, the Fleet,—the closest of comparisons too,—for both are dirty, and both find their way, after much struggling, through Fleet-Market.

He that drives a Pig ought to be blest with even more patience than the long-suffering Job; for none other could drive one to market, and 'bate no jot' of his temper: he that could, might defy 'half the world in arms' to 'shock him.' Imagine yourself, *most* patient of my readers, at the cross-roads at Islington, with a whip in one hand, and at the extreme end of a longish rope,—for he will have the whole length of his tether,—a Pig, endeavouring your way to Smithfield. You direct the head of your charge, by directing his

tail, due St. John's-street-road; he looks down it, as if conscious that it led to that 'undistinguishable bourne,' —Holbourne, if you will,—from whence 'no traveller' in the pork line, 'returns;' but he cannot oblige you, so turns round, and makes with all his legs for the City-road, or Pentonville. If neither of these ways are agreeable, he has no objection to turning entirely round, and retracing his steps through the merry town of Islington, back to the sty of his nativity; and if you cannot decide on this proposition immediately, he is polite enough to persist in waiting your leisure, and sticks to his point, as immoveable as a rusted weather-cock: at last, as if perverseness, as it is the centre of all his actions, is also a pivot on which his action turns, he veers round and round like the boxing-hand of the compass, to all points, but keeps to none, neither making way either forward, sideward, or backward. Your patience now begins to 'ooze out' at your fingers' ends, and you apply the whip in the most persuasive manner possible: he squeaks very penitently, and utters his shrill laments till all the passengers stop their ears with their fingers, and housekeepers shut down their windows. He seems to regret his incapacity to please you, let him turn whichever way he will; but relaxes nothing of his predetermination against St. John's-street-road. You then twist his thin and useless tail round your thumb, till you have screwed it as tight as it were in a tourniquet, and endeavour to urge him forward by this, the last resource of defeated drivers of Pigs—his counter-tenor

squeak is only the more piercing and pathetic; and tells the story of his tail, in 'sounds it is a misery to hear:' but he is as undecidedly decided as ever as to the tenor of his way. And now, stunned by his shrieks, you loose his tail, and pull resolutely at the string which keeps him prisoner by the leg. He was at that moment advancing almost twice his own length on the road you wished him to take, but the pull which was intended to urge him onward he wilfully misconstrues into a direct command to stand still, and once more he is 'fixed as monumental marble.' You ply the whip, till his sides look like a tally of the number of lashes he has received; but it has so little effect on his temper, that you could almost persuade yourself to think that he had taken the whipping as an unmerited compliment when paid to a Pig of his age, since none but Pigs of tender years are whipped to death to make them tender. You pull the leg, twist the tail, and flog the flank for half an hour longer: he squeaks up and down the whole compass of the chromatic scale, till every note is ran through, and your head feels as if sharp swords were thrusting through both ears; but nothing you can do can convince him of the 'error of his ways.' Meanwhile the amused mob increase around you, encouraging your patience by laughing at your distress; and now you begin to grow savage-angry, whereupon the passing old ladies ejaculate every variety of shame in your ears. By this time the blackguard boys begin to swarm about you like bees at a gathering: one volunteers a stick with a

nail in it, a second a stone, a third pushes his cap in the face of your charge; the rest raise the exulting halloo, or keep up the roaring laugh. These insults heaped on insults put your Pig on his mettle, and he either bolts in between their legs promiscuously, and tumbles them down, one after another, like an ill-delivered bowl among 'the descending nine,'—skittles, not Muses,—or else, selecting some newly-breeched urchin in particular, makes between his legs as through a postern, and flinging him over his back, pitches him upon the rope that runs tightly from his leg to your hand, where the bread-and-butter muncher hangs a moment in doubtful poise like a tumbled rope-dancer, and then rolls off into the mud, to the indelible disgrace of his juvenile new corduroys. Or else the averse perversity, to deceive you with a show of willingness to go the way you wish him, makes a fresh start for the pavé, where a flaunting fat lady is waddling her way to the Peacock, and rushing under her petticoats, (which are perhaps not so long as they should be when old ladies wear them,) throws up her heels with the skill of Rowland the wrestler, and then runs on, dragging you after him, squeaking extra-hideously, as if to drown the cries of the more-frightened-than-hurt old gentlewoman with a noise more barbarous. And here, the joke having arrived at the climax, the by-standers laugh louder than ever: when, seizing the porky perplexity by the hind-legs, you fling him over your shoulder, and sweat and swear all the way to Smithfield, your tender charge meanwhile

making the streets vocal with one long-continued shriek; and arriving there just at the close of the market, you tumble him into a pen, head and pettitoes together, and selling him for half his value to get rid of him, swear to turn Jew, and abhor pork, living or dead, as long as you live.

There is also no animal thing that dies with so much clamour, and that has such a sincere objection to die, as your Pig. The sturdy bull takes the death-blow on his head, and drops to the ground, without uttering one bellow of complaint; and even the 'silly sheep' dies quietly under the stab of the slaughterer: but your perverse Pig no sooner suspects the knife to be at his throat, than his shrieks reach the skies; and even when the fatal thrust has passed through his skin, and complaint would be thought useless with any other living or dying creature, his lament, instead of suffering diminution, increases with his suffering; he reels round the sty of his fathers, drunk with death, and continues to shriek till the 'last ruddy drops' that visited 'his sad heart' depart to visit the amalgamators of black-puddings. After death, too, when his chin and cheeks are shaven, and look for once in his life cleanly, there is a most rigid expression of reluctance to die in his pale, pathetic face; the mouth still looks as if it had closed in the full persuasion, that all was not eaten that might be eaten,—that there was still food enough in the trough of life to have made it unnecessary for him yet to die. Days after his decease, this demurring expression continues in the cor-

ners of his chaps, and seems to make a mouth at the ravenous Death; or, to say the least of it, sullenly and silently argues with fate and necessity to the last. Even when his head leaves his body, his spirit knows not where, nor cares where, since a head is of little use without a belly, and his was all in all to him; and even when it lays in cleanly china-dish in some confectioner's window, the yellow and sour lemon disparting his tusked jaws, and mocking at their powerlessness to bite, how chap-fallen it looks, and irresistibly pathetic. I am sometimes, in the sincerity and depth of my grief at beholding one of these dead departed gormandizers of the good things of this world, almost inclined to hope, that a transmigration of soul may be indulgently allowed to these reluctant leavers of the feast of life, and that the spirit of a gluttonous Pig who died yesterday, may become the soul of some future Alderman to be born to-morrow.

Next in pathos to your elderly Pig departed, is the death-look of your tender-yeared Sucking-Pig; it is, as I may say, an emblem, as poetical as any one of old hieroglyphical Quarles's, of the youth of life in death—of the innocence of a life that lives not out of its ignorant youth into the wiser wickedness of age. If ever I become an Alderman, and die, as one should do, of a ninth-of-November dinner, on my civic tomb let the Bacon of the age enchisel a twin-pair of these pretty pieces of pork, to show at once the brevity of life, and the innocence of enjoying the good things of it to the last moment, as do those delicate feeders!——

But let us not, after all, despise the Pig, which we cannot do without contemning pork, which is generally understood to be a derivative from Pig: for by the Pig, routing up the earth for buried acorns, man was taught the necessity of ploughing and sowing if he would likewise eat.

GOOD IN THINGS EVIL.

WANDERING a summer or two ago through one of those delightful vallies which lie humbly at the feet of the mighty Alps, whose rugged and rocky sides, gradually softening into pleasant, easy slopes, at last descend to the margin of that rapid little river, the Arck, whose shores are cultivated with purple vineyards, and pleasant corn-lands, with here and there a farmer's home stead, or a peasant's cabin-hut,—I came, at last, to a straggling little village, snugly spread out on a more wide and level spot than I had expected to find in that rude and retired valley. Admiring, almost to envy, the quiet of that shut-in place, and the happy distance at which its inmates stood from the stir and turmoil of the more populous world; and the still happier ignorance which I inferred they must live in, of the vices, wants, and cares of cities, I passed pleasantly on, through uplands and vineyards, ruminating, as I went, on the gentle beauties of cultivation, and on what are more admirable, the sterner beauties of Nature. In the midst of my reverie, I was startled by the sudden appearance of a youth, who, from his costume, I saw was an inhabitant of that happy valley, and, appa-

rently, one of the happiest of its inmates. He had just darted through the vintage bordering my path, and had leaped almost at my feet. I saw, at a glance, that his countenance was teeming with the blissful turbulence and tumult of a heart, evidently made suddenly happy beyond its hopes, and unable to give sufficient vent to the extravagant joy with which it was filled to overflowing. Nature and the human heart are the same under all climes, and in all countries; and as I love to look at her in all her moods, and have often discerned her nicest beauties in forms and places where they might not be even expected, I conjectured, and rightly too, that I had here found new matter for observation. I hailed him, therefore, as he hurried on in the unconscious delirium of joy, and inquired the distance to the next village, where I intended to rest for the day.

Hearing my question, but without turning to look at him who put it, he satisfied me, and then pushed eagerly forward. In a few moments he had bounded on his way before me, with the agility of one long used to leaping from rock to rock, in chase of the flying chamois, or in revengeful pursuit of the savage wolf, in his retreat with a stolen lamb. I could perceive that his joy was high; for he went on, rubbing his hands together, palm to palm, in that happy, hurried way, which so naturally expresses a satisfaction that no language, however eloquent, can utter; and now he struck them together, and now hummed a bar or two of some old Provençal ballad, which was forgotten in

happier recollections, and as suddenly ran into another of a different measure, but as pleasant. He seemed, indeed, mounted on that high elevation of happiness, which none but young and healthy hearts can pant up to, or feel. As his apparent joy seemed to become even more riotous, and to increase with his way, I became the more curious to discover its cause: so hailing him once more, he stopped; and repeating my first inquiry, as if I had not heard it replied to, he checked his ebullitions for a moment; and as rural people in all countries have a politeness natural to them, he paused, and bowing a friendly salutation, upon my expressing some admiration of his extreme happiness, and the delight I felt at seeing others delighted, I drew from him the recital of its cause, as he had unwittingly betrayed its effects; and found that it arose out of circumstances which had been his deepest grief and despair.

"My friend," said he,—looking at me with a face which seemed as it had never worn the mask of guile for a moment in this mixed masquerade of life,—"as I can read in your looks that you are not one of those cold-hearted beings, who can see nothing in the happiness of their fellow-men, but something to be envious of, you shall know, since you desire it, that, two summers since, I fell in love with the prettiest vintager of our department. She was selected as one would choose a fairer lily than the rest from a valley overgrown with lilies, as the most unblemished girl of a hundred virtuous girls, to personify the pure virgin

Saint Catherine. We hold a religious fête here, dedicated to her honour, which yearly, on the day of her martyrdom, sets out in procession, with garlands, tapestry, music, and dancing, and dedications of first-fruits, ripe corn, and the first milk of our kine: with silver and golden images of our church's most worshipped saints, and crucifixes of precious woods, which after passing through the heart of our valley, and being blessed by all who look on it, returns again to our chapel, to perform a more solemn Mass than is sung on any other occasion, and the day ends in a rural dance, and plentiful feast, where young and old enjoy themselves, and all are happy. It was at this festival that I first beheld the innocent and good Louise. From my boyhood I had resided in a distant province, with a rich uncle, who had lived and died a bachelor, and I became his son and heir by adoption; and with him had remained, till a few days previous to the fête. I need not say that I loved the pretty Louise as soon as I beheld her,—for few who have looked on her could forbear to love her, though in a less degree; for the loveliest of her sex, though they find admirers in all, find but one heart that loves them as thoroughly as they were meant to be loved, and that heart was made when they were made, to love them.

"It was during a pause in the merry dance upon the green sward, where our cottages clustered thickest, that I seized a moment to tell her the secret of my soul. She listened to me with attention, but with an unreplying silence, which I could not but feel; for

though her courtesy spared my pride, her coldness hurt my heart. I could not divine the cause; but I inquired, and soon discovered its origin. There was, even in our simple valley, where you might surmise that wrong never appeared, and the passions and strifes which tear, divide, and oppose man against man, in cities and the populous world, had never entered, to make the sweet blood of the heart bitter,—there was an old and rancorous feud, which had never been appeased, between the Baptistes and the Bertrands, of which families Louise and myself are the only young branches now living. The old animosity was still young in the elder trunks of the two trees; an animosity, however, which I did not feel, but of which I was still to be the victim: nor did she entertain this feeling so much as her relatives; but she was, nevertheless, so far willing to indulge those who felt more of the venom of the quarrel within them, that, though I afterwards found she was not insensible to my passion, yet she would have sacrificed the dearest wish of her heart, to the wishes of those who were unworthy of so much attention, since they could thus feel hatred for one who loved her better than himself. I endured her neglect, and the continual scowl of her few relations, for some time—too long, indeed, for a heart unused, till then, to pain. But my passion grew more intense the more it was opposed. I haunted her paths like her shadow, but she would not seem to see me. In the vineyard I was ever near to carry her purple load: this she would allow me to do; and in the

sunset at evening, when I sometimes sought her hand in the dance with which our simple villagers make their labours light, she consented reluctantly, and seemed, indeed, to accept my attentions as those due only to her sex, and not to herself. I spoke to her as a sincere lover can, with a passionate reverence, which made me, proud as I naturally am, humble as a mendicant living on the alms of the charitable. But this calmness did not continue; I could not always see her disregard of me, without feeling my pride wounded and irritated to soreness; and my thoughts grew impetuous and desperate, when I was away from her, though in her presence I was as gentle as a child.

"My hopes became daily less and less. It was in vain that I sought her now where we had been used to meet; for, to avoid my importunities, she confined herself to the miserable cottage of her bed-ridden mother. But where will not Love intrude himself, and follow his own heart? I pitied Madame Baptiste; for though a poor settler in our village, she was descended of an ancient family, which had been the flower of a Court, and the life of a gay City: and I would have removed her poverty if I had dared—for my father had done her a great wrong. With humility and respect for her sufferings, I entered her humble cottage; but I was angrily chidden thence. I obeyed, but my heart and resolution broke under the infliction. For many days I did not dare to repeat my visit; and I gave myself up to loneliness, and midnight wandering, till my mind grew dark and desperate. It was in

this melancholy condition of mind, that, finding I was despised where I sought to be loved, and seeing that I should never be happy without her who seemed to me to hold in her power all the happiness that I could hope for in this world, I gave a gradual ear to the whispers of the Fiend,—who will turn even the purest and holiest passions of the heart to his own evil ends,—and in the dark hour of desperation, I suddenly determined to plunge into the deep Arck, that runs almost past her door. It was last night that I, who am now so happy, was wretched enough to resolve on so wicked a deed. Ah! my friend, how wrong it is of us, who were born the children of Hope, to fling ourselves at the feet of Despair! How near is she to us, when we think her gone for ever, and when, if we would but turn our faces, we might see that her arms are open to receive us!

"As I went wildly to the spot which I had marked out as a fit place to do this wicked deed, with secrecy from this world, if not from the next, I remembered that I had a purse of gold, part of the hoarded wealth of my kind old uncle; and I thought it would at least wipe off from my soul some stain of the sin I was about to commit, if I relieved with it the wants of the unhappy who needed it: I thought of my kindred, but the poorest of them were rich compared with Madame Baptiste, who would require more than wealth to make her happy; and I determined to hasten back, and leave it with her: it might make her forgive, if she could not forget, the injury which had been done to her; but again, I thought that it was too deep a wrong, and too

old-rooted an animosity, to be so easily stirred. Her sole antipathy to me was, that I was the son of him who had done her husband a grievous injury. Oh, how much should one father, before doing an injustice to another, dread that it may be visited on his children! —for so it was on me. But still, though I could not perceive a reason for hope in this act of kindness, I thought there was at least a good in doing it. I entered the cottage, therefore, where still lay poor Madame Baptiste on a sick bed, which might soon be her death bed. She raised herself, and looked at me in silence; but her eyes again forbade me her walls. I obeyed her, and approached my beloved Louise, to part with her for ever; and gazing on her with looks which asked for her pity, if I might not have her love, I struggled to breathe a last blessing on her, but I could not. She looked in my haggard face, where might be seen, as in a picture, the demon Despair, struggling with the angel Hope. I saw that for a moment she was moved, for she became pale. She would have spoken kindly to me; but the resentment she had been taught to feel mastered her momentary pity; and Madame Baptiste seeing her hesitation, in a voice bitter with scorn of me and mine, commanded her to her bed-side, where, when she had sat down, she clasped her as a shepherd would enfold a lamb from a prowling wolf; and again she bade me quit her humble roof.

"I could not wonder at her fear of me and mine; for old Bernard Baptiste had died of a broken heart, from a defeat which he suffered in a suit at law with

my father, who, being the wealthier man, had ruined him, turned him off the land and forced him from the hearth of his ancestors, to take refuge in a wretched cottage, instead of a fertile farm and comfortable farm-house—to poverty instead of plenty. I saw, with bitter tears for my own fate, and remorse for the wrong done by my parent, that I was hated, and that there was no hope left me. Once more I endeavoured to bless them and depart; but I could not. I then threw down my purse on the pallet—it contained a hundred louis,—I gazed distractedly, for a moment, on my poor Louise, pale as death, whether from pity of me, or of her much-wronged mother, I knew not; then blessing her, who had, as I thought, driven me to despair, I turned to rush out of the cottage. Poor Madame Baptiste, who was almost imprecating curses on me at the moment when I threw my purse on her wretched pallet, paused suddenly; and Louise, too, seemed wonder-struck. These favourable circumstances, however, which I should have seized as hopes of success, I did not then interpret as I ought, for the evil fiend had confounded my senses, and made me believe that this momentary pause in her reproaches was to gain strength more bitterly to curse me, by despising my kindness, and flinging my purse after me. I did not dare, or the dark fiend would not let me, stay to convince myself; but, rushing out of the cottage, I hurried on to the river, not twenty paces from the door, to act the devilish deed I had determined to do.

"It was a night even more beautiful than the day

had been. The mild moon was wandering serenely up the heavens; the world seemed silent, as if it looked with awe on what I was about to do; and for a time I was breathless with dread. I looked in the innocent waters, as I hung over them, and when I saw my own shadow, thought, in my madness, that I was already changed to the dark hue of the fiend. I shuddered, and drew back. I looked again, and I beheld the stars reflected in the clear wave—I trembled and turned away, for I thought the eyes of the blessed in heaven were looking at me. I hesitated, and stared wildly around. The beauty of the night stirred in me a momentary regret, that I was forced to fling myself out of so beautiful a world, and I half relented; but the tempter reminded me of my despair, and I was again determined to die. The leaves rustled above my head, and I started fearfully, for I thought I was pursued, and that I heard voices whispering about me; I looked among them, but saw no one. And now I remembered the happy hours which I had passed in their shade, and when I thought that they would rot on my grave, I wept. The nightingale broke forth with her delicious song, which had always, till that hour, been a delight to me; but it was now a sadness without tears to my heart, and a torture to my ear, as every note of it fell like drops of poison on my brain.

"All was now, for a space, silent; but a moment afterwards I heard my favourite dog, barking and howling in my father's distant farm, as if his instinct told him that all was not right with me. I knew his

honest voice from a thousand: it was ever a warning to the skulking wolves, to whom he was a terror. I remembered, at that instant, that he had leaped into the waters into which I intended to plunge, and had dragged out a poor despairing wretch as unhappy as I was then, but who lived, and was afterwards happy. That thought—the voice of my faithful friend—the remembrance it brought with it of home,—of my father, who, with all his faults, was still my father,—of my mother, without a fault,—whom my untimely death would bring, before their time, to their's,—saved me, in the end, from the fiend who tempted me. I paused, and considered. 'Can I do this wicked deed, and destroy the lives which gave and cherished mine?' I cried to heaven with the voice of agony. I wrestled with the tempter, for my despair was still strong. I then fell on my knees, but could not pray—my tongue had no words. I looked up to heaven, and I thought the pale face of the moon was our Holy Lady's countenance, watching me with an awful look. Thrice I crossed myself and endeavoured to pray; at length, overcome with these struggles, I fell on my face, and covered it with my icy hands, whilst scalding tears of agony burst from my eyes. 'Can I,' again I asked, 'do this dreadful deed? Dare I do it, and fly in the face of God and man, who both have cursed the self-murderer!' Despair wrestled still violently within me; but at length the infatuation of my diabolical purpose burst on my mind with all its look of hideous sinfulness; and I shuddered convulsively at the horror of

the act. 'No,' I cried, 'I cannot—I will not!' I rose on my feet. The Tempter cried 'Stay!' but I rushed from him, and hurriedly bent my way back to the cottage. Some good angel surely prompted me, and led me without my feeling the hand which guided. I looked in at the lattice, and I saw my poor Louise on her knees, weeping by her sick mother's side; I listened, and I heard them beseech the blessed Virgin to reward me for the kindness I intended them. Frantic and fierce with transport, I rushed into the cottage. The poor old sick creature was overcome with joy to see me again. She now said, whilst tears of gratitude and kindness stood in her eyes, that she had changed her opinion of me; she saw that I had not my father's faults. She had thought, and had been told, indeed, that I was unworthy of any one but my father; but she would forgive him for my sake. And then she tenderly bade my poor trembling Louise, who looked pale as the snows of our mountains, to love me openly, if she had loved me in secret. And Louise blushed, and her colour came again, and she confessed, as well as her maiden shame would let her, that she did love me, but that she had stifled the wishes of her heart in obedience to her mother's mandates. I fell at her feet, as humble and penitent as the prodigal at the feet of his father; and I blest her as fervently as a lover can, and was about to confess what I had almost dared to do for love of her, but shame choked the confession in my throat, and I wept like a child.

"To be brief, my friend, the good old lady consented

that I should wed her daughter as soon as I would; and my dear Louise consented too. I kissed her cheek, that was no longer pale with pain, but with too much pleasure, and bade her poor mother be happy, for I would be a son to her, as well as a husband to her daughter; and then I hurried off for my father's farm, with a lighter heart than I have felt for many a month; and then, my friend, I fell in with you—and there ends my tedious story. My kind parents will be glad to hear of my success; for they have grieved much to see my distraction; and my father will, doubtless, be glad of an opportunity of repairing, through me, the wrong he had done the Baptistes, which the pride of error (for oh, my friend, we are more stubborn in evil than in good!) would not let him do with his own hands.

"And now, kind stranger, as you must needs be weary of a long way, and a sad story, prythee step in with me, where you will be as welcome as summer to a farmer, and shall have as brisk a draught of our harmless wine as ever bubbled up to a thirsty lip!"

I refused his friendly hospitality; he repeated his request, but I again refused: I was glad, I said, to see a happy human heart; it was more grateful than any wine to me; and wishing he might continue in happiness, as he had now begun in it, I shook hands with him—he gave me the blessings of all good saints, wished me a safe journey, and in a moment after, leaped through a thicket; and rushing down the path to his father's house, I heard his exulting exclamations

and saw the old couple wondering and fondling about their happy son. In a short time they had re-entered the farm-house, leaving me still leaning over the gate, in admiration of his simplicity and goodness of heart; and revolving, in my meditative way, the qualifying pains and pleasures of life, I felt more than ever convinced that there is a hidden good in our worst evils,—in our greatest misery an involved greater happiness,—and in our deadliest despair, a living and an immortal hope.

THE MAD MAID'S DEATH.

HARD by a wild wood's hedged side,
Where Autumn had but lately died,
Like to her shed leaves, seared and torn,
A mad maid sat her down forlorn—
Faint as a pilgrim on life's road
Who wearies of the world's hard load;
And as her drooping head low hung,
Through her lank hair, half-voiced, she sung
This piteous plaint—"Oh misery!
My heart is torn away from me!"

Unbound and rent, her summer-vest
Lay bare the beauty of her breast;
And loud among her tangling hair,
That seemed perplexed like her mind,
With a huge serpent's hiss, the Wind
Hissed her as Sport doth hiss at Care!—
It was a sound might soften stone
To hear her make so sad a moan,
As low she sung "Oh misery!
My heart is torn away from me!"

By parted speech and wandering words
I learned what hand had struck the chords
Which strung her heart, and jarred its tone
To howling madness and sad moan.
Warm was the youth she loved as Morn
Whom War from her soft fold had torn;
But he lay cold on Honour's bed,
And her few leaves of life were shed:
Therefore she cried "Oh misery!
My heart is torn away from me!"

When fiery War with red right hand
Struck down her love with battle-brand,
She heard the tale that he had died,
And tried to speak,—her tongue was tied
With the first string which loosed her heart;
And when her struggling lips *did* part,
She was as mindless as a child—
Her brain was fired—her words were wild,
And loud she raved "Oh misery!
My heart is torn away from me!

"Find me, oh find my lover's grave,
That I may sit by it, and rave—
And rend my yellow hair, to strew
And cover it from cold and dew;
And sing the songs he loved to hear,
Closing their lines with many a tear!—
Seek me his grave—for *I* grow blind,
That I my lost dead heart may find——
Oh misery! Oh misery!
My heart is torn away from me!"

Wan was her cheek, and white with death,
Though life yet panted in her breath,—
Still sweet, though all her bloom was fled,
Like to a fair rose withered!—
Idly her feeble fingers played,
Pulling the leaves that 'gan to fade,
And shedding them her cold limbs by,
To make a bed whereon to die;—
And still she sang "Oh misery!
My heart is torn away from me!"

Bleak came the wind that bore her breath,
The last of life, to ready Death,
Who came not frowning unto her,
But like a smiling messenger,
To bid her from this world away,—
Too dark for love, too lone to stay!
But to the last her faltering tongue
The same heart-broken burthen sung—
"Oh misery! Oh misery!
My heart is torn away from me!"

LONDON:
Printed by W. Clowes, Stamford-street.

00097949

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016